HOUSING ESTATES

Jevons & Madge

CITY OF BRISTOL

SHOWING MAIN CORPORATION HOUSING SITES

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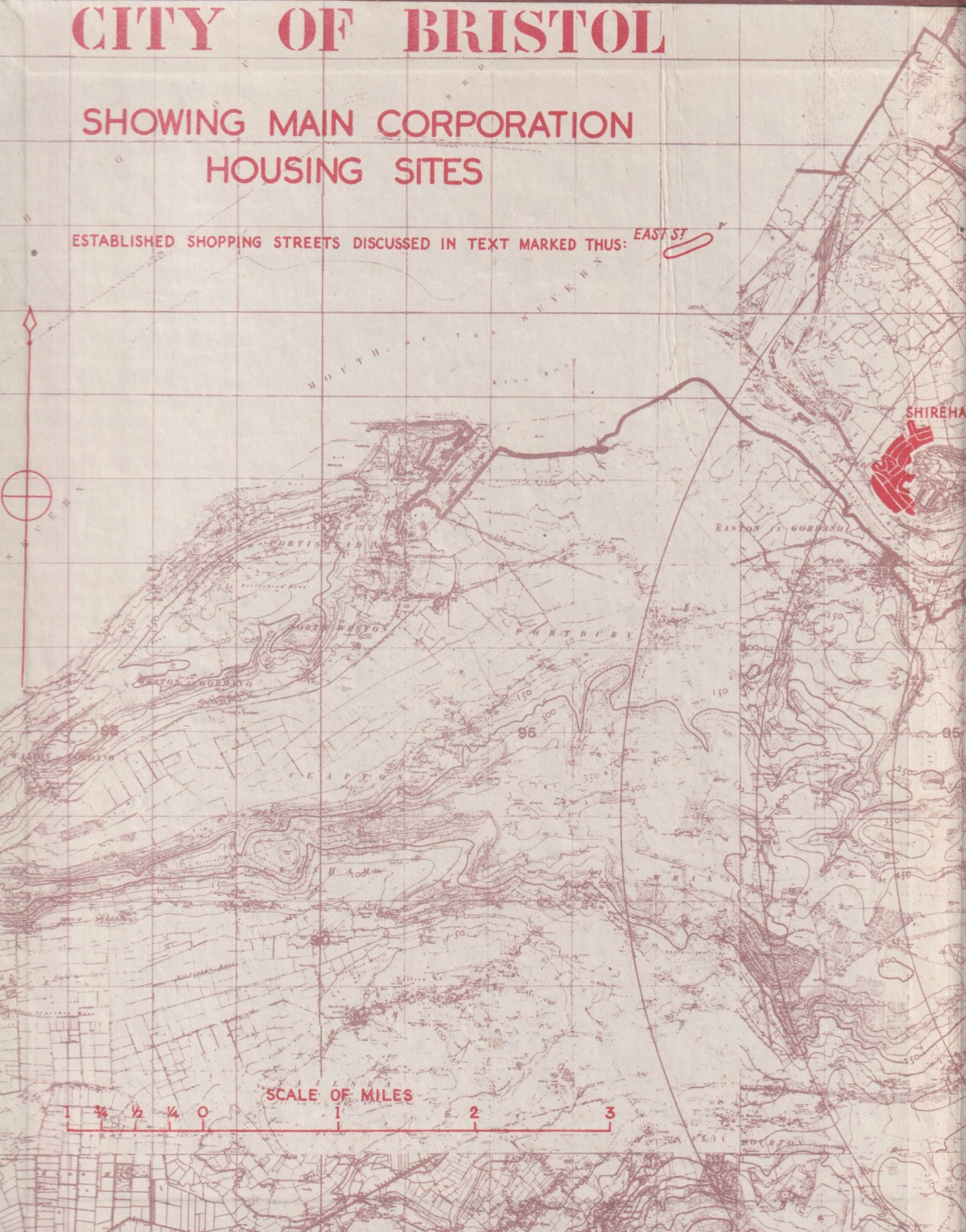
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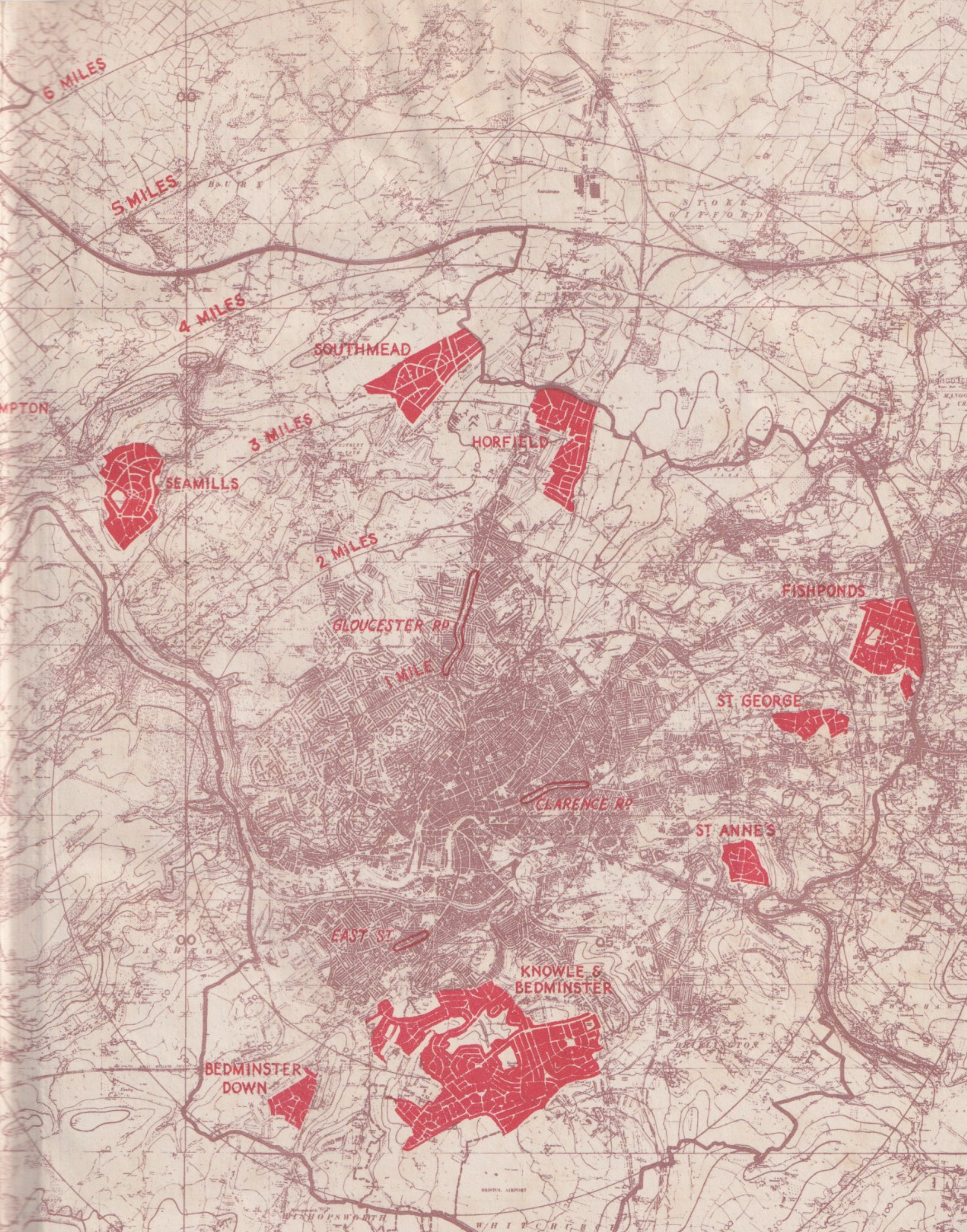
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With birthday greetings

From all at Corner Cottage

1989 - To P.K.

From Dave.

HOUSING ESTATES

A STUDY OF BRISTOL CORPORATION POLICY AND PRACTICE BETWEEN THE WARS

Rosamond Jevons
& John Madge

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NOTE

This book is a further product of the University of Bristol Social Survey, which owed its origin in 1936 to the Colston Research Society. In 1938 the first fruits appeared in the form of a report, *The Standard of Living in Bristol* by Herbert Tout, the Director of the Survey. Further use of the survey material has since been made in various publications, but unfortunately large sections had to remain unpublished when, at the outbreak of war, the Survey team was disbanded.

One study which was left in an advanced state was that dealing with Bristol Corporation's Housing Estates. The backbone of this study is provided by the information coming out of the original house-to-house survey; the working up of this, and the preparation of a report was entrusted to Miss Rosamond Jevons. In addition, Miss Jevons undertook special field work and lived for several months on the Knowle and Bedminster Estate. In 1939 she completed the first draft of this book just before her transference to war work.

In 1944, the Reconstruction Research Group was formed, and in view of the widespread interest in housing and civic planning it was decided to complete the last stages of the book's preparation. This involved extensive checking of the manuscript and the addition of an introduction and of the final chapter of conclusions. With the assistance of Dr. H. S. Phillips, Mr. John Madge has carried out these revisions. But for their labours, publication of this book at the present time would have been impossible.

Acknowledgment must be made to the local authority officers and to all others who have provided and verified facts contained in the pages which follow. Thanks are also due to the many persons who generously gave their services to the Social Survey, particularly to those who undertook the interviews and assisted in tabulating the results of the special survey of estate leavers.

W. Hamilton Whyte,
Professor of Economics.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEMS OF HOUSING ESTATE POLICY

BETWEEN the wars, a total of 15,000 houses were built on the new Council estates encircling the city. These are the visible results of twenty years of experience in providing a new social service, and they represent a substantial civic achievement. At the same time they carry with them new social problems. The transference of highly urbanised families to these outlying estates involves many difficulties and makes some degree of social maladjustment almost inevitable. The estates are designed to become permanent new communities, but at present the composition of their population is abnormal. The result is to place many difficulties in the way of the development of a balanced community.

The problems of rehousing have become more clearly defined and intensified by the transference, during the last years before the war, of families from the unhealthier areas of the city. Large numbers of houses were rapidly erected in isolated districts. The families transferred, in most cases with no alternative choice, found themselves torn from the social environment to which they were accustomed and on which their poverty often made them peculiarly dependent. These families are not an ordinary sample of the working-class community in Bristol. They consist largely of families in which the number of dependent children is abnormally high. Their average standard of living is noticeably below the average for the working classes in the city as a whole.* These circumstances, coupled with the shortage of facilities for social intercourse and recreation, have intensified the problems of individual adjustment to new surroundings. They have hindered the emergence of organised social life and of a settled and responsible spirit. Moreover, families from the slums have more children in them than the average, and so need larger houses ; as the children grow up and leave home, the families' need for space correspondingly contracts. Separate family units multiply more rapidly. The task of planning present and future housing accommodation for such families is thereby made abnormally difficult.

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* See Chapter V.

Most of the new information contained in this report is derived from an analysis of those families living in the Corporation dwellings which were included in the general sample of the Social Survey. Although a few Corporation tenants were living in Council property in central districts, the proportion of the total which these latter form is so small that, for the purpose of this enquiry, all Corporation tenants may be taken as living on one or other of the estates.

The purely statistical evidence of the sample enquiry has been supplemented by an interview study of a sample of those families who left the estates during the year 1936-7, and by a special study of the amenities at Filwood Park. The tables showing the numbers and types of houses built have kindly been prepared by the Housing Committee of the Corporation.

There are four problems upon which this survey sheds some direct light. Three of them stand out in their immediate bearing upon the welfare of the estate families; changes in cost of living due to rehousing, the provision of amenities on the estates, and municipal rent policy. The fourth, a problem of planning, concerns the size and location of houses needed for the present and future population. Before these problems can be isolated, it is necessary first to describe the context within which the Corporation estates have grown up.

CHAPTER II

INTER-WAR BUILDING AND DEMOLITION

1. *General.*

In this chapter a brief outline is given of the steps taken to improve working-class housing in Bristol between the wars.

The improvement of housing conditions involves both the provision of additional new houses and the replacement or reconditioning of worn-out and unhealthy ones. This has involved the creation of new outlying estates as a preliminary to rebuilding the central areas. Building was held up for about five years during the 1914–18 war and was seriously retarded for several years after 1918. The consequent deterioration in the housing situation, together with the new social attitude induced by the war, focused attention on the national responsibility for housing.

The immediate problem in 1919 was to increase the number of houses. At the same time, building costs were inflated by the high rate of interest and the scarcity of materials and labour ; it was impossible to provide houses at prices within the reach of those who required them. The situation was met for the first time by a national grant for housing. Subsidies were made available both to local authorities and to private builders, to enable houses to be let or sold at less than the economic rent or price.

2. *Housing Legislation.*

It may be useful to recapitulate the national housing legislation, which provided the framework within which Bristol's housing effort was carried through.

The effort to improve working-class housing was implemented by a series of Housing Acts, of which those of 1919, 1923, 1924, 1930, 1933, and 1935 are the most important.

The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919 imposed upon local authorities the duty of reviewing and remedying the housing shortage in their areas. Relatively few houses were built with the aid of the subsidy given under this Act ; this was due to the method of subsidy, which encouraged high costs, as well as to the disorganisation of the building industry. The cost in Bristol in 1920 of a non-parlour house was £986, compared with £460 in 1939.* Even the subsidised rents of these houses were still far beyond the reach of all but the lower middle class and better off working-class families.

For a time, after the Geddes " Axe " in 1921, building was virtually suspended. In a subsequent effort to lower the rents of Council houses, subsidy granted to local authorities was restored in 1924 under the Wheatley Act ; this subsidy greatly stimulated building. Meanwhile, in 1923 the Chamberlain Act had been passed, with the primary aim of encouraging private enterprise. This Act enabled the local authority, on receipt of an annual treasury grant, to make a lump sum payment to private builders on a per-house basis. From 1925 these two Acts and the return of more normal economic conditions accelerated the output of houses both by local authorities and by private builders. In 1929 further assistance to private enterprise was not considered necessary and subsidies ceased.

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* These costs include (approximately) Land £25, Roads £45 and Sewers £15. The first post-war houses are again costing at least £1,000. In 1939 the cost of a parlour house was £535.

The first phase of the drive to build additional houses came to an end in 1933 ; after this date government assistance for any purpose other than for the abatement of overcrowding or for rehousing families from the slums was discontinued. Since then, with the exception of a small proportion of houses built by the local authority without subsidy, the provision of houses to meet the normal expansion of the population has been left, as it was before 1914, to private enterprise ; the activity of local authorities has been directed to a frontal attack upon the chronic housing evils of the slums and of overcrowding.

Assistance for slum clearance was made available under the 1923 Act, but effective machinery for tackling the slum problem was first provided by the Housing Act of 1930, the Greenwood Act. In 1933 all authorities were called upon to concentrate their efforts upon slum clearance ; each had to submit to the Minister of Health a five-year programme of building and demolition aimed at eliminating slums from their districts.

Two years later, with the 1935 Act, came the campaign against overcrowding. Each authority was required to conduct a house-to-house survey in order to determine the extent of overcrowding and the number of houses required to abate it. A conditional* subsidy for building these houses was granted.

The law relating to working-class housing was consolidated by the Act of 1936 ; up to the outbreak of war the main task of authorities was to administer this Act, which is concerned mainly with slum clearance and the abatement of overcrowding. At the same time authorities must provide houses without government subsidy to satisfy any housing need not met by private enterprise.

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* In the 1935 Act the subsidy was left to the discretion of the Minister. It was not made automatic until 1938 with the passing of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act.

3. *Building in Bristol between the wars by the Corporation and by Private Enterprise.*

Between 1918 and 1939 some 36,000 new houses were built in Bristol;[*] during the same period, just under 5,000 houses were demolished, resulting in a net increase of over 30,000 houses. On 31st March, 1939, there was a total of just over 108,000 houses in the City. These figures show the extent to which the City expanded in the last twenty years before the war; the expansion was most rapid in the last ten years. There was no corresponding increase in population; the result was a spreading of the population and a real improvement in housing conditions.

The majority of these new houses (60 per cent.) have been built by private enterprise. This total includes middle-class houses, and it is interesting to find that the Corporation and private enterprise have contributed about equally to the housing of working-class families, as defined by the Survey. Of the Survey families, 14.2 per cent. were found to be living in Corporation property and 16.7 per cent. in property built privately between the wars.[†]

The course of inter-war building in the City and the respective contributions of municipal and private building at various periods since 1907 are shown in Diagram 1, at end of book.

The stagnation during the 1914–18 war shows up clearly in Diagram 1; it will also be seen that the scarcity was aggravated by the decline in house building which had set in several years before 1914. It is evident that building by the Corporation has proceeded in waves in response to changes of policy under the Housing Acts. Private building maintained a steady increase from the time of its revival in the middle twenties until the withdrawal of the subsidy in 1929. Stimulated by the low rate of interest, and perhaps by the withdrawal in 1933 of subsidies to local authorities for general housing purposes, it picked up again in 1934, and expanded from that date until the outbreak of war.

The relative importance of the output of Council houses declined from 1922 onwards. The actual number built declined markedly when the Wheatley subsidy was withdrawn. The Corporation did not add significantly to the total number of houses in the City after 1934; this was because the demolition of slum houses has kept pace with the provision of new houses.

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[*] Several thousand further houses have been built close outside the City boundaries.

[†] A small proportion of the latter were sharing houses. The practice of sharing houses, or even of taking in lodgers, was in general prohibited in Corporation property.

4. *The Extent of Financial Assistance.*

Just under half of all inter-war houses were subsidised. These subsidies have come both from the rates and from national taxes, the contribution from each source varying with the particular Act under which the houses were built.

Table I shows the number of houses built with and without assistance both by municipal and by private enterprise in each five year period between 1920 and 1939. It will be seen that municipal enterprise made a larger contribution in Bristol than in the whole country.

TABLE I

HOUSES BUILT WITH AND WITHOUT STATE ASSISTANCE, 1920–39

Period ending 31st March	Number of Houses built by						Total Number of Houses
	CORPORATION			PRIVATE ENTERPRISE			
	With State Assistance	Without Assistance	Total	With State Assistance	Without Assistance	Total	
1920–24 ..	1,402†	150*	1,552	113	390	503	2,055
1925–29 ..	4,223	22	4,245	2,530	2,229	4,759	9,004
1930–34 ..	5,044	67	5,111	377	5,185	5,562	10,673
1935–39 ..	3,230	472	3,702	—	11,161	11,161	14,863
TOTAL ..	13,899	711	14,610	3,020	18,965	21,985	36,595
PERCENTAGE	—	—	39·9	—	—	60·1	100·0
Corresponding percentage for England and Wales ‡	—	—	27·7	—	—	72·3	100·0

† Includes 141 temporary dwellings at Shirehampton which were demolished between 1927–28.

* Erected by Ministry of Munitions between 1919–20 and taken over by Corporation in January 1924.

‡ For the period 1st January, 1919 to 31st July, 1939.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

Of the assisted houses erected by private enterprise, 92 per cent. were provided under the Housing Act of 1923. The most generous general subsidy for local authorities was that given under the Wheatley Act of 1924, and the majority of Council houses were built with its aid. Table 2 gives the number of Council houses built under each of the Housing Acts. Those built for the purpose of rehousing slum families and overcrowded families are grouped together because the latter were built with the aid of the 1930 subsidy, which was more generous than that granted under the Overcrowding Act of 1935.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF DWELLINGS BUILT BY THE CORPORATION UNDER EACH HOUSING ACT (TO 31ST MARCH, 1939)

Act.	*No. of Dwellings.*
1. Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919	1,330 (i)
2. Housing Act, 1923	1,913 (ii)
3. Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924	7,142 (iii) (iv)
4. Under Acts of 1930, 1936 and 1938	3,514
	13,899
Without Assistance	711
	14,610

NOTES—

(i) Includes 141 temporary dwellings at Shirehampton which were demolished 1927/8.
(ii) Includes 40 houses brought within City boundary as extended by Somerset Review Order, 1933.
(iii) Includes 40 houses brought within City as above.
(iv) Includes 24 houses brought within City boundary by the Gloucester Review Order, 1935.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

5. *The Cost of Corporation Housing.*

The cost to the Corporation of housing during the nineteen years ending 31st March, 1939, was £3,454,000. Of this, £1,188,000 was raised in the form of rates, and £2,266,000 in grants from the national exchequer. The revenue received from the rents of their house property during a typical year, 1936, amounted to £256,110.

The total capital cost, including building and associated works, has been of the order of £8,250,000.

6. *Corporation Building in the Centre and the Suburbs.*

The planning policy of the Corporation has been to develop housing estates in the suburbs. As is shown later, little building has been done in the central areas. It will also be seen that the dwellings provided are predominantly houses. Only 4 per cent. of the total are flats, and on the estates flats constitute only 1.8 per cent. of the total of dwellings.

The need for a substantial increase in the number of houses gave the Corporation little alternative to their policy of building houses in new estates on the fringes of the City. This book includes an examination of the effects of this policy.

Even before the war quite large patches in the centre of the City had been cleared of slum property ; enemy action has since extended the area. A change of emphasis towards the provision of central flats was already beginning to show itself ; so far these have been mainly designed for elderly people.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTATES

1. *Their Situation and Size.*

The Corporation has developed nine main housing estates, each of 400 or more houses, on the hills to the north, south and east of the City. By far the largest is the Knowle and Bedminster Estate to the south, with 6,034 houses. All except one* of these estates are within a radius of four miles from the centre of the City. Most of these estates include a small number of dwellings provided by private enterprise.

The addition of several small scattered sites brings the total number of houses and flats built on all the estates up to March, 1939, to just under 15,000. The size and estimated population of each of the main estates are shown on the following Table 3.

* The exception is Shirehampton (788 houses) which is near the port at Avonmouth.

Table 3

HOUSES BUILT BY THE CORPORATION AND BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE ON THE MAIN ESTATES

(at 31st March, 1939)

Estate	Area in Acres	No. of houses, etc. erected by Corporation and let	No. of houses, etc. erected by Corporation and leased	No. of houses provided by Private Enterprise and leased	Total No. of houses	Estimated Population 1939	Gross density of houses per acre	Date when building started	Date when Estate Completed
Bedminster Down	53	391	1	50	442	2,281	8·34	Oct., 1925	Sept., 1929
Fishponds ..	180	1,618	37 (*d*)	22	1,677	7,300	9·32	June, 1920	June, 1930
Horfield	264	1,542	2	—	1,544	6,200	(*a*)	Feb., 1925	May, 1938
Knowle and Bedminster	1,044	5,392 (*b*)	93 (*e*)	549 (*g*)	6,034	27,644	(*a*)	Nov., 1920	(Not complete)
St. Anne's ..	45	461	1	—	462	2,313	10·25	Feb., 1928	Sept., 1933
St. George ..	86	860	—	26	886	4,233	10·30	July, 1924	Mar., 1931
Sea Mills ..	187	1,030	156 (*f*)	93	1,279	4,422	6·80	Aug., 1920	June, 1931
Shirehampton ..	113	788	8	126	922	4,276	8·16	June, 1920	Oct., 1930
Southmead ..	452	1,586 (*c*)	14	8	1,608	6,432	(*a*)	Jan., 1931	(Not complete)
Totals	2,424	13,668	312	874	14,854 (*h*)	65,101	8·54 (*a*)		

Notes—

(*a*) These sites are not yet completely developed, and have been excluded from the calculation of the average density for all Corporation estates. (*b*) Includes 239 flats and 8 shops. (*c*) Includes 60 flats and 4 shops. (*d*) Includes 4 shops. (*e*) Includes 6 shops. (*f*) Includes 12 shops. (*g*) Includes 14 shops. (*h*) With the 608 houses on other scattered sites this gives a total of 15,462.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

2. *The Growth of the Estates.*

The oldest estates are Fishponds, Sea Mills and parts of Bedminster and Knowle; all were begun in 1920 and the former two were completed by 1932. Meanwhile, between 1926 and 1932 several new estates were developed, at Speedwell, Horfield, Bedminster Down and St. Anne's; in 1931 the first houses were built at Southmead and the Knowle extension was begun. The years 1931 and 1932, especially the latter, saw great activity on many sites. The number of houses completed in 1932 reached the unprecedented level of nearly 2,000—a figure not, even remotely, rivalled in any subsequent year.* Building after 1933 included an extension to Horfield, but otherwise it was restricted to the development of the two large estates at Southmead and Filwood Park.†

The early houses were subsidised by the Housing Acts of 1919, 1923, and 1924; they were provided mainly to meet the housing shortage and not to rehouse slum dwellers. However, the Council also took advantage of the special provisions of the 1923 Act to carry out certain slum clearance schemes; a notable case was the rehousing of families from the Dings area of St. Philips ward.

The Housing Act of 1930 enabled houses erected for families displaced from slum areas to be let at rents considerably lower than previously. By far the greatest number of these houses, 2,426 to 31st March, 1939, were built on the Knowle and Bedminster Estate.

The Council has also found it necessary to make some provision for families urgently wanting houses but not living in slums, and houses for this purpose have been built in Horfield and let at non-assisted rents. It was intended that 1,000 more such houses should be built before 1941, to be let at about 14s. a week, and a start was made at Novers Park, adjoining the Filwood Park end of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, before war interrupted the programme.‡

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* The economic depression had led to a very low rate of interest and labour was plentiful.

† See maps on front and back end papers. Filwood Park was at first known as Knowle West.

‡ For descriptions of the estates see the illustrated reports of the Secretary of the Housing Committee.

3. *The Knowle and Bedminster Estate.*

It will be seen that the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, to which special attention is being given in this book,* has been growing continuously since 1920. The composition of the population and the physical structure of the estate reflect in an interesting way the evolution of housing policy since the first world war. From East to West, the estate falls into three main social zones. At Knowle Park are the expensive 1919 and 1923 Act houses (many of them leased) and the more prosperous tenants. Next comes a wide band of Wheatley Act houses at somewhat lower rents. Filwood Park, at the western end, contains large numbers of slum-clearance houses. It was on this estate that the first houses were built under the 1930 Act, and to which families from the oldest and worst slum areas were moved. Finally, at the extreme western end of the estate as it now stands are a number of houses provided for families who were previously living under overcrowded conditions.

This estate, therefore, provides an excellent cross-section of the various classes housed by the Corporation since 1920. At the same time, since families rehoused from slums form a far larger section of this estate than of the others, it provides an instructive contrast with the estates in general. By inference, it illustrates the social conditions in a slum-clearance rehousing area.

By 1939 the estimated population of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate was 27,600 ; this represented an increase of 5,000 in the two years since the survey.

4. *Garden Development.*

For better or for worse, the inspiration for the design of most housing estates built in England between the wars comes from three experiments in town planning ; these can be called the garden village, the garden city and the garden suburb. The Bristol estates conform to normal practice. The idea of " garden " development calls for low density of houses, for two-storey houses with front and back gardens, for trees and grass verges ; these requirements encourage the building of semi-detached houses. Such features derive from the revulsion felt by the late nineteenth-century social reformers against the planless and ugly industrial towns, so completely isolated from the countryside, which had disfigured their own era.

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* See Chapter X.

The earliest experiments took the form of garden villages. The most famous are Bournville, which was started in the 1880s beside the Cadbury factory near Birmingham, and Port Sunlight, built up in 1888 around the Lever soap factory near Liverpool. By far the strongest influence upon town planning in the last half century has been that of Ebenezer Howard, whose book *To-morrow*, published in 1898, crystallised the idea of the garden city. Letchworth, the first garden city, was born of this book and of Howard's own energy, though it was not, as he had envisaged, owned by the inhabitants. The second experiment began at Welwyn in 1920. The aim of garden city development is to promote urban decentralisation and the creation of new " social cities," as Howard called them, as centres with an independent economic and social life. In the two examples we have in this country this independence has not been fully attained.

There is a significant difference between either of these and the normal municipal estates. The latter have almost invariably taken the form of dormitory suburbs joined by the arteries of transport to the civic and economic life of the parent town. They are in the direct line of descent from that third type of garden planning, of which the outstanding example is Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The largest estate in Bristol is nearly twice the size of Welwyn Garden City, but so far from being a separate town, it is a residential suburb. It is essentially a part of Bristol.

The chief characteristic of garden estate lay-out, and the factor which forces such estates to spread out so far as often to absorb land well outside the older city boundaries, is the low density. The similarity between housing estates all over the country derives largely from this fact. A density of twelve houses to the acre was the maximum allowed in urban areas under the 1924 Act ; in practice even lower densities are regularly found. When subsidies under this Act were cancelled, the density regulation ceased, and higher densities may now be adopted. Except for blocks of flats, the number of houses in a single terrace under one roof is also legally limited. In Bristol such terraces may not have more than eight houses. Semi-detached houses, with a sprinkling of terraces of four houses, are in practice the characteristic types ; the result is too often a lack of coherence in street architecture.

5. *The Houses.*

The typical Bristol Council houses are of plain neo-Georgian type. The majority are faced with red brick, but a proportion have been cement rendered and washed cream or white. Over the twenty years between the wars various designs have been adopted ; before the war there were sixteen standard designs in use.

The municipal emphasis in house design is on the non-parlour house with three bedrooms and one living-room. About two-thirds of the houses built on the estates were of this type. The rest have parlours.

TABLE 4

PROPORTION OF PARLOUR AND NON-PARLOUR HOUSES ON EACH OF THE MAIN ESTATES (as at 31st March, 1939)*

	Total Dwellings	Non-Parlour Per cent.	Parlour Per cent.	Flats Per cent.	Total Per cent.
Bedminster Down ..	442	61·5	38·5	—	100·0
Fishponds	1,673	50·8	49·2	—	100·0
Horfield	1,544	93·5	6·5	—	100·0
Knowle and Bedminster	6,006	71·8	24·2	4·0	100·0
St. Anne's	462	92·5	7·5	—	100·0
St. George	886	81·9	18·1	—	100·0
Sea Mills	1,267	48·5	51·5	—	100·0
Shirehampton	922	62·6	37·4	—	100·0
Southmead	1,604	87·9	10·6	1·5	100·0
Total ..	14,806	71·7	26·5	1·8	100·0

* Figures of total dwellings include cottages and bungalows. Both totals and percentages include houses provided by private enterprise. Shops are excluded throughout the table.

NOTE.—Apart from 12 with four bedrooms, all Parlour Houses have three bedrooms. There are about 100 one-bedroom flats, 50 two-bedroom flats and 110 three-bedroom flats.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

The preceding Table shows the ratio between parlour and non-parlour houses on each estate on 31st March, 1939, nearly two years after the survey enquiry was made.

It will be seen that parlour houses are much commoner on the older estates such as Bedminster Down, Fishponds, Sea Mills and Shirehampton. At Knowle Park, the original section of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, over 81 per cent. of the total were parlour houses. Some of the later estates have hardly any parlour houses.

All the Council houses include a bathroom and w.c., either upstairs or downstairs (the latter is generally preferred by large families), a larder and a coal shed as well as a scullery for cooking and washing. The living-room, which is fairly large in non-parlour houses, has to be used as nursery, as well as for eating and sitting. In houses with a parlour the living-room is smaller than in non-parlour houses, but the bedrooms are larger. One cupboard and a large dresser for crockery are provided in the living-room ; there is a cupboard under the stairs. Upstairs on the landing there is a small linen-store ; there is generally a built-in cupboard in one bedroom.

The downstairs rooms and two main bedrooms contain open fire grates. In the great majority of cases gas is used for cooking and for the wash boiler. Normally, bath water is heated in the copper and pumped to the bathroom by hand, but some tenants instal geysers. There is no constant hot water system and no hand basin in the bathroom.

6. *The Planning of the Estates.*

In street planning, variety is often successfully obtained by setting back some of the identical semi-detached houses and by the adoption of corner houses of different design. Parts of the estates are undoubtedly monotonous in appearance ; as some tenants say, the houses are " barrack-like." The uniformity of materials and elevations is not relieved by any variety in colour. The ubiquitous privet hedge helps little to conceal this uniformity. There is scope for greater imagination in planting, and wooden fencing could well be used. Climbing plants and shrubs in gardens add greatly to the appearance of the houses on the older estates, and here too the streets are often bordered by grass and trees. As Table 3 shows, no estate considered as a whole reaches a density of as many as twelve houses to the acre. The density at Sea Mills is only 6.8. The newer districts have been planned on less spacious lines and the practice of planting trees and grass verges has ceased.

Each estate has some kind of centre ; this is usually laid out as a green square with the shops at one side or at each corner. The squares are unobtrusive, the public buildings are few and those which do exist are not all located in the centre ; some centres have sacrificed the sense of unity through their excessive area of unusable open space, and by the scattering of public buildings too uniformly around their fringes. The scale is too large for the size of buildings. In the smaller estates life gravitates to the nearest main road off the estate, where a better shopping centre and perhaps other amenities—such as public-houses and cinemas—can be found. At Filwood Park a real shopping centre more in scale with the development of this large area has been begun ; another will later be built at Southmead, and at other estates. There is already a Cinema and a Social Centre at Filwood Park, and blocks of shops on the Broadway have flats above them ; these form a fairly impressive potential focus for the estate. Both the Cinema and the Social Centre were the first to be built on a Bristol estate. The erection of public-houses, though not prohibited, is strictly controlled ; so far there is only one, the Venture Inn, at Filwood Park, and one off-license premises in Filwood Broadway.

CHAPTER IV

THE TENANTS

1. *The Social and Occupational Grade of Estate Families.*

Table 5 gives a broad picture of the social structure of the estates' population, on the basis of the occupation of the head of the family when in employment.* Those heads shown as " unoccupied " are either retired, old or incapacitated.

The table shows that the commonest estate tenant is an unskilled manual worker, for example a builder's labourer or a docker. About one third of the total are of this class. The next largest group of tenants are semi-skilled, engaged on repetitive factory work, driving lorries and so forth. In a somewhat smaller number of cases the head of the family is of the skilled manual or artisan class.

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* It is justifiable to identify social class broadly with occupational grade in this way because increased skill is normally associated with a higher standard of education and a greater regularity of work and of pay.

TABLE 5

OCCUPATIONAL CLASS OF HEADS OF FAMILIES*

Occupational Class	Percentage of Families: In Corporation Houses	Percentage of Families: In Whole Survey Area
Men Heads		
Lower Professional	0·5	0·3
Ordinary Clerks	4·0	3·6
Shop Assistants and Minor Commercial ..	1·6	6·5
Supervisory Manual	3·1	2·4
Skilled Manual	19·3	21·0
Semi-skilled Manual	28·1	26·2
Unskilled Manual	32·4	18·4
Unoccupied or 65 and over	5·3	9·7
Women Heads		
Occupied (whole or part time)	0·6	2·6
Not gainfully occupied	4·8	9·0
Unknown	0·3	0·3
Total	100·0	100·0
Number of families	643	4,491

* Data from Social Survey, Summer, 1937.

Finally, a small proportion (6 per cent.) are not engaged in manual work but belong to the class of "blackcoated" workers.

The proportion of unskilled manual workers' families is considerably higher on the estates than in the whole survey area, and the proportion of non-manual workers' families is correspondingly low. There are very few shops on the estates and the carrying on of any business in a Council house is strictly prohibited. The biggest difference is in the class covering Shop Assistants and Minor Commercial men heads, and the absence of small tradesmen on the Estates helps to explain why this section is badly represented. Retired families are also under-represented on the estates.

The average level of skill amongst estate tenants was in 1939 already low, and was falling.* During the last few years before the war, the majority of new houses were let to families from the slum areas; insofar as future housing is carried out with a view to clearing slums, the same tendency is liable to continue.

The figures for the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, on which more than 40 per cent. of the heads of families were found to be unskilled, illustrate this tendency very clearly. There is an abnormally low proportion here both of skilled manual and of non-manual workers.

The families displaced from the slums were, so to speak, the second wave of colonists on the new estates. They were thus superimposed upon communities which had already become relatively established; the effect undoubtedly proved disturbing to the older tenants. By the outbreak of war the prevailing tone of some estates was set, through force of numbers, by the least skilled and poorest tenants. Where this had occurred, as on the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, it had become very difficult to secure co-operation between the different classes of tenants and to achieve a sense of unity on the estate. The effect was to produce a reaction against newcomers.

There are many objections to banishing the poor *en masse* to the outskirts of the city. Their poverty makes it particularly difficult for them to develop a new community under conditions so different from those of the central areas. Moreover, poorer districts, if not contiguous with a shopping and amusement centre supported by other sections of the community, suffer serious curtailment of their facilities for recreation and their sources of mental stimulation. A sense of restlessness and frustration results.

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* This results from the provisions of the Housing Act of 1936, which prescribes that " the authority shall secure that in the selection of tenants a reasonable preference is given to persons who are occupying insanitary or overcrowded houses, have large families or are living under unsatisfactory conditions." This injunction applies to all houses under the management of the housing authority.

Occasionally, small estates have been built not far from the old houses ; this was done at St. Anne's. It is only possible, however, to rehouse a reasonable proportion of the previous population by adopting a much higher density of re-development than is normally attained.

2. *The Age Composition of the Estates Population.*

In more senses than one a new estate is like a colony. The people settling down are young families ; the population resembles that of the white population of Northern Rhodesia or of New Zealand in the early years of the twentieth century. This age composition colours all the activities and needs of the community.

The preponderance on the estates of couples in the middle years of married life is summarised in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6

AGES OF MARRIED WOMEN IN HOUSES OWNED BY BRISTOL CORPORATION (1937) AS COMPARED WITH TOTAL SURVEY SAMPLE *

Group	Percentage of Married Women Aged			Total number of married women
	Under 30	30–49	50 and over	
City-owned Houses ..	14·0	71·0	15·0	577
Total Survey Sample ..	16·0	53·1	31·0	3,594
Bristol City (1931 census) ..	15·6	52·2	32·4	86,679

* Data from Social Survey.

The age structure of the population which contained this large proportion of wives in the thirties and forties is shown in Diagram 2.*

This diagram brings out in an illuminating way how different the population structure on the estates is from that of the whole city. The age distribution curve for the estate contains one very exaggerated bulge and two hollows, compared with the more regular curve representing the population of the whole city. The hollows show a deficiency of persons both in the twenties and over fifty and the bulge represents an abnormal proportion of children. Exactly one half of the total population living in Corporation property were aged 19 or under.

In society at large the adult is so predominant that the seething young life on a housing estate, especially on a new one, gives a special character to the whole atmosphere. Children are the conspicuous members of the estates and the pivot of daily life. Table 7 and Diagram 2 demonstrate this fact. At the time of the survey 30.4 per cent. of all Bristol's children under 15 lived in Corporation houses, compared with only 6.5 per cent. of the total population aged 55 or over.

Clearly, the estates' social and welfare requirements are regulated by their age structure. Ten years from now the progressive ageing of the inhabitants will radically alter these requirements. What these will be are suggested by the hypothetical curves indicated on Diagram 2. These curves reveal that the need for nursery schools and crèches, which could hardly have been more pressing in 1937–9, will not remain as urgent, and that the enormous pressure on school accommodation will slacken. On the other hand, additional transport will have to be provided as the young people now at school begin to earn their living. A few years later (in three to five years from now) the bulge will have moved still further forward ; this period will witness the splitting up of families as sons and daughters wish to marry and need houses of their own. Meantime more parents will have ceased to earn and will become dependent on pensions and on their families.† The period of greatest change will be in the next few years.

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* At end of book. See also Appendix 1 for tabulated details.

† The actual position of the bulge varies with each estate, more or less according to the date of building.

3. *Family size and composition.*

While families of all sizes larger than one person are found on the estates, there is no provision for single people. The proportions in which the other sized families occur, however, is strikingly different from the proportions in which they are found in the survey area as a whole (see Table 15). On the estates there is a markedly higher proportion of big families. The typical (modal) family in a Corporation house consists of four people ; five-person families are the next most frequent in size. This contrasts with the city as a whole in which families of two and three people are the most numerous. The average number of persons in estate families is 4.4, which is almost exactly one person per family more than the average for the city.

TABLE 7

THE COMPOSITION OF FAMILIES ON THE ESTATES*

Every 100 families contain the following persons :—

	In Corporation Houses	In Whole Survey Sample Area
Aged 65 (Men and Women)	9	23
,, 21–64 (Men)	104	94
,, 18–64 (Women)	110	107
,, 14–20 (Boys)	31	18
,, 14–17 (Girls)	22	13
,, 5–13 (Children)	119	53
,, 0–4 (Infants)	47	25
Lodgers	1	2
Total Persons	442	333
Total Earners .. } Excluding lodgers ..	168	146
Total Non-earners	274	187
Number of Families	643	4,526

* Data from Social Survey, Summer, 1937.

The age and sex composition of the average family on the estates is shown in the preceding Table, from which it will be seen that the estate families were larger than normal because they contained more children —especially dependent children. On the average they contained twice as many aged 5 to 13 and very nearly twice as many of the other under-21 age-groups.

These figures of family composition point to a low proportion of earners in the families on the estates. The number of earners per family was slightly larger than in the whole survey area, but the ratio of earners to non-earners is much lower. Every 100 earners had to support 163 non-earners on the estates, whereas in the whole survey sample area 100 earners were only supporting 128 non-earners.

CHAPTER V

STANDARD OF LIVING

It has been shown earlier that the population on the estates contains more than its share of unskilled workers and their families. We have also seen that families are noticeably larger than in the city as a whole. It is important to find out whether these abnormalities are reflected in unusually low family incomes and in depressed standards of living.

1. *Family incomes.*

Analysis of the material collected in the course of the Social survey shows that the average income of families in Corporation houses is slightly higher than the average for all families in the survey sample. This fact taken by itself is, however, misleading. As families on the estates are larger than in Bristol as a whole, the actual income per head is smaller. The occupations followed by the heads of estate families mainly command low wages. This is compensated both by the larger number of earners per family and by the comparative absence of pensioners. A few families with relatively high incomes also raise the average.

2. *The Standard of Living of Families.*

Figures of income alone tell us little about the standard of living. To present a true picture, the income of each family must be related to the number and type of persons which it has to maintain. Table 8, below, shows the standard of living measured in this way in accordance with the Survey minimum standard.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING AS BETWEEN FAMILIES IN CORPORATION PROPERTY AND FAMILIES IN THE WHOLE SURVEY SAMPLE

Standard of Living*	Families in Corporation Property. (642 Families)	Families in the Whole Survey Sample (4,474 Families)
Comfortable	5·8	12·2
Sufficient	45·8	56·3
Insufficient	32·2	20·8
In Poverty	16·2	10·7
Total	100·0	100·0

* For definitions, See Appendix 2

This Table reveals that the families on the City estates were not so well off as the working-class families in the city as a whole. The typical (modal) family on the estates had an " insufficient " income ; in Bristol as a whole the typical family had an income of between 100 per cent. and 200 per cent. above the " minimum needs." Better-off families are not of course completely absent from the estates. Six per cent. of the total were in fact comfortably off in the guarded sense in which this term is used by the Survey ; this compares with 12 per cent. in the Survey area as a whole. Another 46 per cent. were above the insufficiency level. The remaining 48 per cent., however—just under half of all Corporation tenants—had incomes insufficient to relieve them from a constant struggle to make ends meet. Sixteen per cent. actually fell below the minimum needs standard. This is a poverty rate half as high again as that found in the Survey area as a whole.

These figures provide some indication of the extent to which the tenants have the means to live a satisfactory life in their new surroundings. It is safe to say that half the families do not want for the necessities of life, are able to improve their homes, visit relatives outside the estate, travel to central shops and cinemas and draw generally on the wider benefits which the city provides. It is doubtful, however, whether the 48 per cent. below the sufficiency level are able to benefit to the full from their larger homes and healthier environment, or to play their part in building up the new community.

3. *The Standard of Living of Children on the Estates.*

An earlier report* emphasised the fact that measurement of the standard of living in terms of families disguises the significant variation in the incidence of poverty upon different age-groups of the population. Poverty is there shown to fall most heavily on children below earning age, and to be more severe as family size increases. For example, in the City as a whole 20 per cent. of children under 14, compared with 10.7 per cent. of persons of all ages, were below the Poverty Line.

It has already been shown that children have been affected more than any other section of the population by the provision of municipal housing. One-third of the total of Bristol's working-class children now lives on the estates. These children have been saved from the old damp houses, from overcrowding and from the general environment of the slums. Have they a real chance of health and full development in their new homes? Can they benefit from the extra space at their disposal?

The very fact that children form such a large proportion of the total population points ominously to a negative answer. The actual position may be seen from Table 9, below, in which all children under 14 have been grouped according to the standard of living of their homes. It will be seen that 29 per cent. of them were members of families living above the sufficiency level. The remaining 71 per cent. came from homes where there was an insufficiency of income; this compares with a figure of 54 per cent. below sufficiency for the survey area as a whole. There was little distinction between the standard of living of children under 5 and that of children between 5 and 14 years old.*

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* *The Standard of Living in Bristol*, University of Bristol Social Survey, Arrowsmith, 1938. Herbert Tout, M.A.

TABLE 9

CHILDREN IN POVERTY IN CORPORATION PROPERTY AS COMPARED WITH TOTAL SURVEY SAMPLE

Standard of Living†	Per cent. of Children under 14 in Families with this Standard of Living	
	In Corporation Property	In Total Survey Sample
Comfortable	0·4	1·5
Sufficient	28·6	44·1
Insufficient	42·7	33·0
In Poverty	28·3	21·4
Total	100·0	100·0
Total Children	1,066	3,504

† For definitions, see Appendix 2.

The assumption that a child is suffering from under-feeding if the family in which it lives is below the poverty line need not in all cases be true. Other members of the family may go short in order that the children shall have the best possible chance. Various studies of the way in which the mother suffers most from family poverty have been made.‡ On whichever member it falls, however, there will inevitably be undernourishment in a family living below the poverty line.

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* The monetary value of any school meals or milk received has been taken into account in calculating family income, so that their effect is allowed for in Table 9.

‡ *Working Class Wives*, by Margery Spring Rice (Pelican Series) is a notable example.

4. *The Earning Strength of Estate Families.*

Table 10, which follows, classifies families according to the number of earners they contain. It shows that the estate families are in a relatively favourable position in that few have no wage earner and an unusually high proportion have subsidiary earners.

TABLE 10

THE NUMBER OF EARNERS PER FAMILY IN CORPORATION PROPERTY AND IN THE WHOLE SURVEY SAMPLE

Number and Description of Earners	Percentage of Families	
	In Corporation Property (643 Families)	In Whole Survey Sample (4,526 Families)
Two or more earners (including at least one adult male	38·6	31·6
One adult male earner	52·6	49·2
Earner(s), but no adult male earner	6·3	8·5
No earner	2·5	10·7
Total	100·0	100·0
Average size of family (persons)	4·4	3·4

In 15 per cent. of the cases, however, the head of the family was either in casual work or unemployed, compared with 9 per cent. for the whole survey area. The incidence of unemployment among estate tenants raises the important question of how far it is harder for those living on a Corporation estate to earn their livelihood by casual work or to secure a permanent job. Casual workers who could gain a living doing odd jobs in the centre of the city, such as hawking for furniture removal, certainly found such a means of livelihood impossible when living on the outskirts. The majority of casual workers were not of this type, however, but were dockers and labourers, who have further to go to their work. The unemployed have further to go to the Employment Exchanges or to apply for jobs, and have to spend money on fares, cycles or shoe leather to get there.

The question of married women's work also arises, since the amount of the wife's contribution to the family income either by regular or casual work is a factor affecting the standard of living. It seems that on a housing estate some distance from the centre it is not easy for married women to go out to work, because there is no local demand for such work and because of the time and expense of travelling to other districts and the lack of contact with demand. Normally, incomes are supplemented by taking in lodgers or boarders ; neither of these was permitted in Council houses before the war, except in special circumstances, although cases of both were found. The demand for lodgings near the Filton aeroplane works was already by 1939 presenting a particular temptation to tenants on the nearby estates.

The prospect of supplementing income in this way is offset by the fact that the mothers of larger and poorer families are precisely those least able to go out to work and least able to obtain permission for a lodger in their already crowded houses.

Analysis of families by income brings out one other fact which needs emphasis. The poverty on the estates tends to differ in cause from poverty in the area as a whole, and tends therefore to differ in its incidence. Lack of an earner through old age or death, in particular, plays a far smaller part on the estates at the moment, although this will not always remain so. Poverty on the estates is the poverty of young families, unskilled and with many children.

CHAPTER VI

COST OF LIVING ON THE ESTATES

Removal to a Council house may lead to any of the following increases in cost—more spent on transport to work; cost of shopping increased through restricted local facilities or through having to pay bus fares to get to a shopping centre; higher rent; increased outlay on equipping, cleaning, heating and running a larger house.

For exact information about these various costs, a more detailed enquiry into family expenditure would be needed than has been undertaken. This would involve a comparison between family budgets before and after removal. In lieu of this, information on the relative costs of living allows only broad conclusions to be reached.

1. *Transport Costs.*

Several of the principal estates, including Filwood Park, are near no industrial sites ; Bristol's older industrial zones are located in the central area of the City, or on certain fringes, as at Avonmouth and Filton. Workers on the estates, particularly on those to the south of the city, must therefore use some form of transport to get to work.

The travelling costs of families still in the central areas can be taken as an index of those which displaced families had to bear before they moved. On this basis, removal involved an increased cost in the case of 32 per cent. of all earners.

The main effect of removal was not on the average level of transport costs but on their incidence. Comparison of the last three columns in Table 11, below, shows that only 14 per cent. of estate earners spent nothing through being able to walk to work or to work at home ; this compares with 31 per cent. of the total earning population in the Survey area. Of those living in central wards 46 per cent. were within walking distance of their work ; these are the wards from which the new estate dwellers have mostly been moved. In other words, whereas almost every second earner living in the centre had nothing to pay for the journey to work, on the estates only one earner out of every seven was in this position.

Table 11

METHOD OF TRANSPORT USED BY ESTATE AND OTHER BRISTOL WORKERS, 1937 *

Method of Travel	All Male Earners in Survey Sample	Place of Residence				All Earners in Survey Sample
		Beyond City Boundary	In Wards on the Boundary	In Central Wards	On Corporation Estates	
	Percentage of Earners aged 14 and over					
Working at Home	3·9	5·9	2·9	6·5	0·7	4·5
Walking	23·7	23·5	16·6	39·9	13·3	26·1
Cycling	33·5	25·8	34·9	23·9	39·5	27·2
Own Car	2·6	4·1	2·4	0·6	1·5	1·9
Train, Tram, Bus	33·1	36·3	40·6	27·1	41·9	37·5
Other Means	0·8	1·5	0·6	0·5	0·9	0·6
Free	0·6	0·4	0·3	0·4	0·1	0·4
Some Paid for	1·8	2·5	1·7	1·1	2·1	1·8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of Earners	4,542	681	2,106	817	980	6,113
No Information	96	7	32	31	13	123
Total	4,638	688	2,138	848	993	6,236
Median Cost of Public Transport	1s. 10½d.	1s. 10d.	2s. 1d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 7d.	1s. 8d.

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* Data refer to week prior to the Survey visit. Those interviewed were asked about their journeys for the previous week.

The development of suburban housing has influenced the city transport system ; at least partly due to this decentralisation, the traffic congestion in the centre has made it necessary to build new roads and to abolish tramcars. However, the increase in distances to work has not led to a corresponding increase in the use of public service vehicles. To avoid expense, many earners resort to cycling whenever weather permits. The average expenditure on public transport by estate earners is below the average for the city, and it appears likely that cycling is most commonly adopted by those with the longest distances to go. In this way the extra cost of travelling from the estates is concealed ; the expense of buying and maintaining a bicycle, which is properly a cost of transport, and may be quite heavy in the first instance, is not shown.

Table 11 shows that the typical expenditure of estate earners who travel to work by bus, tram or train, was 1s. 7d. ; this was actually 1d. less than the typical fare for all earners paying for transport and only 1d. more than for such earners living in the central wards.

Table 12, overleaf, shows in greater detail the transport costs of earners using public service vehicles.

This Table reveals that, although living on an estate does sometimes involve high costs, very large travelling expenses are exceptional. It also confirms that the average expenditure on public transport by earners living on the estates is only slightly higher than the average for the central wards from which they were displaced. As it stands, this statement is somewhat misleading. Not only can no allowance be made for the costs of cycling, but also there is great variation in the closeness to factories of different estates. On the whole the later estates have been well related to workplaces, as at Shirehampton and Filton ; this tends to conceal the length and expense of journeys which families living on other estates—particularly on the Knowle and Bedminster Estate—have to make.

It should also be remembered that many young earners live on estates. As their earnings are lower than those of adults, the proportion of their earnings absorbed in transport is greater. As more children on the estates begin to go to work, this will assume even greater importance.

Although the journey to work is the most regular and important, other journeys are also inevitable. Families displaced from clearance areas will try to keep in touch with relatives and friends whom they have

TABLE 12

TRANSPORT COSTS OF EARNERS USING PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES, 1937 *

Cost of Transport	All Male Earners in Survey Sample	Place of Residence				All Earners in Survey Sample
		Beyond City Boundary	In Wards on Boundary	In Central Wards	On Corporation Estates	
	Percentage of Earners aged 14 and over					
Under 9d.	4·2	3·4	2·8	9·3	5·2	5·4
9d.—1s 2d.	20·5	16·3	21·8	29·2	27·4	24·0
1s. 3d.—1s. 8d.	20·8	18·5	22·4	22·7	25·3	21·0
1s. 9d.—2s. 2d.	17·8	18·0	18·9	13·0	17·2	17·3
2s. 3d.—2s. 8d.	9·6	8·6	9·3	9·7	7·0	8·8
2s. 9d.—3s. 2d.	10·4	9·9	10·2	7·4	6·3	9·7
3s. 3d.—3s. 8d.	4·5	4·7	4·7	4·6	2·9	4·2
3s. 9d.—4s. 2d.	4·5	7·7	4·5	0·9	3·7	4·1
4s. 3d. and over	7·7	12·9	5·4	3·2	5·0	5·5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number included above	1,369	233	803	216	383	2,148
Cost Unknown	22	1	5	2	3	27
Employer Pays	111	13	49	4	24	113
Total	1,502	247	857	222	410	2,288
Average Cost	2s. 2d.	2s. 5½d.	2s. 1d.	1s. 9d.	1s. 10½d.	2s. 2½d.

* See footnote to Table 11.

left behind. They will visit the centre of Bristol for shopping* and amusements. Attendance at a Hospital Outpatients' Department may also necessitate frequent long journeys.†

In dealing with the reasons why families leave the estates, a later chapter indicates that the cost of fares plays a significant, if latent, part in influencing the decision. The difficulties and cost of travelling to and from the estates may just be enough to turn the scale in favour of leaving. There is a substantial case for giving estate dwellers special travelling rates. At the same time any increase in local facilities in the way of shops, entertainments and clinics would help to reduce the need to travel.

2. *Shopping Facilities on the Estates.*

At the end of July, 1939, a small enquiry was made into the shopping conditions on two estates and in two central shopping districts ; this was undertaken in order to compare facilities and prices. Filwood and Southmead estates were selected for this study, as they both house families moved from the slums. The central areas chosen were East Street, Bedminster and Clarence Road, Lawrence Hill. Both are good shopping streets in mixed working-class districts.

East Street is a self-contained shopping centre serving Bedminster, Windmill Hill and Redcliff. It has the reputation of being one of the best household shopping areas in Bristol. Prices were found to be slightly lower here than in Lawrence Hill. The latter is nearer to the centre of the City, quite near to Old Market Street and Castle Street. For this reason it is not such a distinct centre as East Street. It serves parts of Easton and St. Philips' wards, and has suffered from loss of custom through slum clearance.

A small number of housewives who shopped in each area were asked what shops they most used, how much and what types of food they bought, and the prices of standard articles. These prices were checked, and the prices of other commodities were obtained by direct enquiry in the shops. Visits were paid to most of the shops on or near the estates and to a sample of the most popular shops in the central districts. In addition, windows of all shops were carefully watched for price variations and for special cheap lines and bargains.

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* In order to reduce fares on shopping expeditions, housewives on Filwood Park often travel by workman's ticket ; this involves catching a bus before 8 a.m.

† For example, there is still no Outpatients' Department at Southmead Hospital. The return fare from Southmead to the Infirmary is 10d.

Prices of staple foods and cleaning materials only were obtained. The cost both of the cheapest quality and of that in normal demand were always noted. No attempt was made to investigate prices in small local shops.

Shopping Facilities at Filwood Park.

There are four sets of shops at or near Filwood Park. They are at Melvin Square, Leinster Avenue, Newquay Road and Filwood Broadway, and are spaced about one-quarter of a mile apart. Filwood Broadway is to form the main shopping centre of the estate; although already bigger than the others it is still incomplete. The Leinster Avenue shops have been built on private land just adjoining the estate.

At the date of enquiry, there were seventeen separately owned shops on these four sites. They included two Co-operative Stores, each with several departments, and a private shop with three sections. In order to indicate the facilities provided, the following List shows the number of shops at which the various commodities or services could be obtained.

Groceries	7
Butchers	5
Fruit	3
Sweets, Tobacco and Newspapers	4
Drapery and Children's Clothes	2
Lending Libraries	2
Chemists	2
Fish	2
Bakery and Confectionery	1
Fried Fish	1
Hardware	1
Adults' Clothes	1
Boots and Shoes	1
Hairdresser	1
Post Office	1

A few of the shops resemble village stores; while carrying a small selection of innumerable goods, such as pills and sewing materials, these concentrate on groceries or confectionery.

The grocers' shops cater largely for poor families, and a reasonably good selection of cheap groceries was available at Leinster Avenue and

Melvin Square. For a number of years the only meat obtainable at Filwood was that sold by the Co-operative Stores at Melvin Square and by one other butcher in Newquay Road. The stock kept was limited, and many cheap specialities were unobtainable. Shortly before the war, a second Co-operative Butcher's shop was opened in the Broadway, and two more private butchers also set up shops. In spite of these developments, meat was still largely bought outside the estate. Fish was only being sold by the two Co-operative Stores. Clothes could be obtained only at one of the Co-operatives and at one small Draper's shop, and hardware only at the Co-operative.

It was estimated at the time that 12,000 people were living in 1930 Act houses, at the western end of the estate. This whole population was very badly served. The distance of these shops from most homes, the limited range of goods and the impossibility, until just before the war, of buying hardware and clothes had led to the development of a flourishing roundsmen's trade. Fish, fruit, vegetables, sweets, magazines, clothes, hardware, cockles and toy balloons were some of the articles being sold in the streets, or from door to door. During the investigation, a fish and chip van was making two rounds a day.

All who could afford the fare and the time were supplementing their shopping on the estates by a weekly visit to Bedminster, usually on Friday or Saturday. Others, who could not manage a weekly visit, were shopping in Bedminster once a fortnight, principally to buy meat, fruit, certain groceries and cleaning requisites, as well as household articles and clothes unobtainable on the estate. The return fare to Mill Lane, Bedminster, is 3d.; this must be added to the cost of shopping.

This investigation revealed beyond question that money goes further for those within easy reach of a central shopping area. Although grocers' shops on the estate offer quite a good variety of cheap goods they cannot compete with cut price shops near the centre. Staple goods such as sugar, flour, tinned foods, cleaning materials and proprietary articles cost consistently less at the cut price stores. As a result, the latter shops are widely used. Comparative costs of certain lines are given overleaf; these show appreciable savings to be effected by those within reach of a cut price shop.

TABLE 13

COMPARISON OF PRICES AT CUT PRICE AND OTHER SHOPS (July 1939)

		Cut Price Shops	Estate and Other Shops
Granulated Sugar	2 lb.	5½d.	6d.
Self-raising Flour	3 lb.	4½d.	4½d.–6d.*
Heinz Baked Beans	Small Tin	4½d.	5d.
Tinned Salmon (same brand)	Tin	4½d.	5d.
Peaches, large	Large Tin	7d.	8d.
Sunlight Soap	Small Bar	3½d.	4d.
Persil	Small Packet	3d.	3½d.
Rinso	Packet	5½d.	6d.
Shredded Wheat	Packet	6½d.	8d.
Kellog's Cornflakes	Packet	4½d.	5d.

* 4½d. was lowest price found outside cut-price shops.

Meat cost more at Filwood Park than in Clarence Road or in Bedminster. It was also less fresh and available in far less variety, especially in the cheaper qualities of sundries such as liver and kidneys, which were mostly sold mixed with steak. The different kinds of pig meat and etceteras such as trotters, tails, chitterlings and skulls, which are all very nourishing and cheap foods, were difficult to obtain. At Filwood itself the Co-operative Stores were selling English meat almost exclusively; although good quality meat was greatly appreciated, it cost too much for many housewives.

Cold meats were being widely bought for mid-day sandwiches to take to work and for family tea; a far larger variety of cheap brawns and pressed meats was available in the central areas, where forspur and ham could also be bought more cheaply than on the estate. Fish also cost more in the Filwood Co-operative Stores than in Bedminster, and there was relatively little variety. The same was true of fruit; many varieties of perishable fruit which could be bought in Bedminster did not appear in estate shops. Tomatoes were 1d. a lb. cheaper.

There appeared to be no difference in the prices of butter, eggs or cheese, though it was possible to buy good Dutch cheese for 6d. a lb. in Bedminster, whereas the cheapest stocked on the estate was New Zealand at 7d.

Facilities and Prices at Southmead.

Much of the above description of Filwood applies equally to Southmead estate. The situation at Southmead is different, however, in several respects. The population of the estate is far more mixed, and the families on the whole are not nearly so poor. The estate also adjoins privately built property, and shares the shopping centre at the junction of the Southmead and Doncaster Roads. Thus there is, compared with the Filwood estate, a more varied population with a higher general income level. On the estate itself there were at the time only four shops, all in Cranmore Crescent. Southmead is also much further from the City centre than Filwood; this aggravates the cost of travelling. The return fare to the Centre is 10d. The bus service to the shops in Gloucester Road is not good; the return fare costs 7d. For these reasons, families are much more dependent on local facilities than are those of Filwood.

The local shopping centre contains a good variety of the usual suburban shops; these include ironmongers, shops for garden requisites and dress shops, as well as a Co-operative Stores. The quality of the goods stocked is good and prices are mostly too high for the poorer inhabitants of the estate. A few shops, set apart from the others, do however provide to some extent for the needs of these families. One of these—a grocer—was significantly displaying a notice in the window that goods could be obtained at "City prices." This shop had a large range of cheap groceries. There were, however, no cut prices to allow the saving of halfpence on sugar, flour or tinned foods, and the choice of cheap lines of meat was limited. In this respect the estate seemed to be even more isolated than Filwood.

At Southmead vegetables appeared to be cheaper both than in the Central area and than in Filwood. On the other hand, one shop, which obviously did a considerable trade even with poor customers, was selling ham for 8d. a quarter as compared with 7d. or less in other areas. That it could do so is an indication of the deterrent, in respect both of cost and of time, to shoppers wishing to travel further afield.

In general the facilities at Southmead appeared to be good for the better-off inhabitants ; for poorer families, shopping in this area was undoubtedly more expensive than in the central districts. This was chiefly due to the absence of cut prices and of cheap meat shops. The position was aggravated by the difficulty and cost of travelling regularly to the City. This would be eased by the issue of cheap weekly shopping tickets.

The following conclusions emerged from this limited enquiry. Firstly, articles identical in quality, e.g. granulated sugar, could be bought more cheaply in the centre. Secondly, cheaper qualities of the same article, e.g. cheese and meat, could be bought in the centre. Thirdly, there was much more variety in the central shops, especially of fruit, fresh meat and cold cooked meats. Finally, in comparing the position at Filwood with that at Southmead it appears that poor families at Filwood were better off, income for income, both in respect of local facilities and in the ability to get to central shops.

3. *Expenditure on Rents.*

In the twenties and early thirties the higher rent was the most serious financial result of moving to a Council house. During 1931, for instance, the Housing Committee reported that tenants then paying 11s. 6d. per week for Corporation houses had previously been paying an average of 8s. 3d. per week. This represents an average increase of 3s. 3d. over the amount previously paid ; one can well imagine the struggle which such an increase entailed for many families.

No comparison on the lines of the above has since been made ; the Housing Committee filing system did not facilitate a new calculation. It can be said, however, on the authority of the Letting Department, that most families moved from condemned property pay higher rents on the estates than they did before. The great majority of new tenants come from such houses. The rents for this type of property are sometimes very low, but it is probable that the increase has been reduced since 1931 through the provision of Council houses to be let at 7s.* The minority of families who were not displaced from slum clearance areas were *both* less likely to have to meet an increase in rent and more likely to be able to pay.

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* The rent charged for these houses was raised to 7s. 9d. in 1939 and is now 8s. 1d.

4. *Furniture, Cleaning and Heating Costs.*

Families moving from small slum houses generally do not possess enough furniture to equip a whole Council house. Before the war, the great majority bought new furniture by instalments, two rooms—the main bedroom and the sitting room—usually being furnished in this way. This involves an additional weekly payment ; one extra room is often not used. The average cost of equipping the house has been put at 2s. 6d. per week.* The move into a new house also involves new curtains and linoleum, and the renewal of other small household items ; this adds to the initial cost.

There is no doubt that these payments are a strain on most families. At times they cannot be met without outside assistance. To help solve this problem, several local authorities and housing associations have set up furniture supply schemes, under which they sell essential articles, making a small addition to the rent. The authority buys the furniture in bulk, and sells it without profit. Leeds, Glasgow, Birmingham, Bolton, Rotherham and some of the London Boroughs have adopted variations of this scheme, and it is believed that its adoption in Bristol would be very useful.

The Housing Committee, as a result of collections made by the Bristol Council of Christian Churches, normally maintains a stock of second-hand furniture which can be used to help cases where hire-purchase is precluded through poverty. This method, which carries the stamp of charity, is not popular with tenants. Moreover, it cannot relieve the disproportionate demand for beds and bedding.

There is strong evidence that the added size and number of rooms in Council houses leads to larger bills for heating and cleaning. The estates are mostly built in healthy but exposed positions, and the houses need more heating than in the centre ; the adoption of semi-detached layout exposes one more wall to the elements. Terraced houses are naturally warmer in winter. The draughtiness of the houses and the difficulty of keeping them warm was several times mentioned by families who had left the estates.

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* Information from Miss Reed of the Civic League, Filwood and Southmead Branch. (1938 prices).

5. *General Conclusions.*

The evidence in this chapter suggests that in one way or another transference to a Council house is likely to increase the cost of living. The actual increase cannot be estimated in the absence of a special budget study ; this subject could with advantage be further explored.

CHAPTER VII

FAMILIES AND HOUSES

1. *The Size of Houses.*

In earlier chapters the types of tenant selected by the Corporation and their social conditions have been described. The next stage is to study the Corporation's housing policy. Have houses of the right size been built ? Will they continue to fit the needs of the future ?

The evident need for a relation between the size of houses and the size of families to be accommodated is complicated by two factors. First, individual families expand as more children are born, and contract as these children grow up and leave home. Second, the age composition of the estate populations is abnormal and is subject to rapid variations. Traditionally, changes in the size of family are met by the sharing of houses and by taking in lodgers. Newly married couples first live with parents or in lodgings, moving to a house of their own when they have children. As the children grow up and leave home, a lodger may occupy the spare room, or half the house may be let to another family. In this way accommodation is roughly adapted to income and needs.

On the estates this process of adjustment is restricted ; except in special circumstances Council houses may not be shared nor lodgers taken.* Moreover, the problem of changes in family size arises in a particularly acute form on the estates. As was shown earlier, estate families differ very much in size; there was, in 1939, a family of twenty at Filwood Park. No such variety of accommodation is provided; by far the greatest proportion of houses built are of three-bedroom types. This means that small families live in overlarge houses and that large families must leave the estates if they are not to infringe overcrowding laws. Table 14, below, gives the position in 1939, just after the Survey; it shows that 96 per cent. of Council houses have three bedrooms; 3 per cent. have fewer, and only 1 per cent. have more than three bedrooms.

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* Compare the 1931 Census "Housing Report," Chapter 10.

TABLE 14†

SIZES OF HOUSES AND FLATS PROVIDED BY THE CORPORATION UP TO 31ST MARCH, 1939 (Leased Houses Included).

		Dwellings with Number of Bedrooms						Total of Dwellings
	Bed-Sit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Houses—Non-Parlour ..	—	—	37	9,920	110	—	—	10,067
„ Parlour ..	—	—	1	4,629	58	2	1	4,691
Flats	41	222	196	176	—	—	—	635
Total	41	222	234	14,725	168	2	1	15,393
Per cent. of Total (Shops and Bungalows excluded) ..	0·3	1·4	1·5	95·7	1·1	—	—	100·0%
Shops with Rooms above								52
Bungalows								12
Grand Total								15,457

† There is no real discrepancy between these figures and those given in Table 4. This table includes individual premises and flats owned by the Corporation in the centre of the city.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

Houses with three bedrooms are most suitable for families of four and five persons, which are the sizes of family most frequently found on the estates. The maximum number which they can conveniently accommodate depends upon the age and sex of the members of the family ; as a rough approximation, it is reasonable to say that more than five adults would be crowded, but that where there are young children, six people could fit into a non-parlour house without overcrowding. Seven people can fit into a three-bedroomed parlour house, as the bedrooms and overall space are somewhat larger. The standard of persons per house recommended by the Ministry of Health for the rehousing of slum families and overcrowded families is rather higher than this.

The result of fitting estate families into dwellings of standard size was an overcrowding figure in 1936 twice as high for City-owned property as for property in the survey area as a whole.

To obtain a picture of the housing situation as a whole on the estates, Table 15 has been compiled from Survey information. It shows the sizes of families occupying three-bedroomed parlour and non-parlour houses, and may be taken as typical of conditions in the summer of 1937.

The picture presented in this Table is simplified, as no distinction is made between persons of different ages and sexes. This does not obscure two main conclusions. First, it is manifest that a number of houses were too full, while a surprising number of others had one and even two bedrooms to spare. Eight per cent. of houses contained two people only.

In the second place, it will be noticed that parlour houses were emptier. They were accommodating more small families and fewer larger families than non-parlour houses. The average size of the families in the parlour house was only 4.1 persons as compared with 4.7 persons in those without a parlour. The larger families were in fact living in the smaller houses. This was true even up to the largest families of all, consisting of twelve and thirteen people. Eighty per cent. of all families containing six or more persons were living in non-parlour houses, as against 64 per cent. of smaller families.

It is evident that the housing of large families presents a special problem, which falls on the Council more than on the private builder. For a certain proportion of the families the houses built are altogether too small; others could better be suited by a reshuffle between parlour and non-parlour houses. The danger of overcrowding poor families was fully recognised by those living on the estates; it found expression in the somewhat puzzling complaint—"they're making worse slums up here than there were in the centre." The housing of larger families has never been successfully tackled. It is important to discover the reason for this failure.

TABLE 15

SIZES OF FAMILIES LIVING IN CORPORATION HOUSES, SUMMER, 1937*

Number of Persons in Family	Per cent. of Families of each size living in :			
	Non-parlour Houses, 3-Bedroom Per cent.	Parlour Houses, 3-Bedroom Per cent.	All 3-Bedroom Houses Per cent.	Families in Whole Survey Sample Per cent.
3 or less	23·8	34·0	27·2	60·1
4 and 5	49·8	51·6	50·4	30·3
6 and 7	18·3	10·1	15·6	7·2
8 or more	8·1	4·3	6·8	2·4
Total	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0
Number of Families ..	382	188	570	4,526
Average size of Family ..	4·7	4·1	4·5	3·35

* Data from Social Survey.

2. *The Problem of Housing Large Families.*

There are several reasons why municipal effort has, like private enterprise, substantially failed to provide a satisfactory standard of housing for large families. A local authority is not much better equipped to deal with this problem, which is essentially a problem of poverty, than are private builders. There has been a constant demand for houses, and the urgency of this demand is no doubt partly responsible for the neglect of the larger families. Another reason is that until the 1930 Act the Government subsidy was granted for each house built, irrespective of its size or the number of people rehoused; for many years this encouraged the building of small houses at the expense of the provision of larger houses. Again, families have outgrown houses which at the time of allocation were big enough. Babies have become children, children have grown into adolescents, new babies have been born. All these causes are, however, overshadowed by the basic trouble which is, of course, the poverty of the rehoused families and their inability to pay an economic rent.

The solution of this problem rests on the solution of one of the larger problems of society, that of ensuring full employment, security and adequate wage-levels. Meanwhile, family allowances will help these families to afford bigger houses.

Fortunately, the worst cases of overcrowding recorded in Table 15 were eliminated soon after the Social Survey material was collected. By 1939, most overcrowded families had either themselves moved in order to avoid overcrowding, or had been transferred to larger Council houses. Many of these larger houses were built with the aid of the special subsidy obtained under the 1930 Act. A special rent allowance scheme, different from the usual rebate schemes, was also introduced; this encouraged transference to more expensive houses, new maximum rents being based on the family's income, in accordance with a fixed scale.

Table 16 shows changes in the situation between the original overcrowding survey and 1939. By the latter date the overcrowding rate for all municipal property was still 1.7 per cent.

The building of these larger houses as an afterthought rather than as an integral part of the rehousing programme has had certain unfortunate consequences. In the first place it has meant that abnormally large families are all housed in the same area. Even more serious is the fact that it has proved impossible to abolish overcrowding without again moving the affected families to a new locality.

The families still overcrowded in 1939 lived mainly on the East Bristol estates; these sites are fully built up and there was no room to build larger houses. All parlour houses were already occupied. The

Council could not compel families wishing to remain in this district to move to distant sites, such as Southmead, Filwood or Horfield; overcrowding could therefore only be abated as existing parlour houses became empty. Families so large that they would be overcrowded in a parlour house had no choice but to leave the area.

TABLE 16

OVERCROWDING IN COUNCIL PROPERTY
(Reported and Abated)

	Original Over-crowding Survey 1936	Subsequent Years			Total	
		1937	1938	1939 (to 31st March)		
Families reported overcrowded	652	94	105	13	864	
Families with Overcrowding Abated:—						
(*a*) By transfer to larger Council houses	—	38	254	43	335	619
(*b*) By voluntary action of tenants	—	10	265	9	284	
Still overcrowded at 31st March, 1939	—	—	—	—	245	

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

To some extent, overcrowding has been abated by this type of transference from one Council house to another. In these cases the parlour has to count as a bedroom. In practice it is seldom used for sleeping. The families continue to sleep in three upstairs bedrooms, though some improvement results from the fact that parlour house bedrooms are larger. In one case at Filwood, where the wife took the instructions of the Housing Department seriously, and installed a bed in the front downstairs room, the remarks and curiosity of her neighbours quickly drove the bed upstairs again. The strong feeling against having beds in the parlour is based on social prestige. As one of the tenants put it—" It's like the lodging-houses you used to see in St. Judes, with the bedstead in the front room." When, eventually, the overcrowding standard is raised to exclude the use for sleeping purposes of rooms designed for daytime use, the present position, whereby overcrowding is abated on paper more than in practice, will be finally eliminated.

The difficulty of increasing the supply of large houses suggests the importance of providing houses from the start big enough to allow space standards higher than those of the prescribed statutory minimum. It is to be hoped that statutory housing standards will be raised steadily ; if the houses allowed by the local authority are only slightly above the statutory level, and provided that there is no further decrease in family size, each raising of this level will renew the problems of overcrowding.

This is the more certain to result if the general policy of placing larger families in non-parlour houses is maintained. The scheme of rent allowances, which had by 1939 permitted on paper the solution of overcrowding, applies only to those families who lived below the space standards recognised as legally tolerable. It does not solve the problem of the families who are crowded if not overcrowded ; they could expect no relief if transferred to parlour houses. Nor does it permit of such families being given parlour houses on moving to the estates, to avoid later removal to larger houses when standards are raised. They will only take a parlour house if they can themselves afford the extra cost.

3. *The Future.*

Housing a selected population such as that of the estates involves more than providing houses of the number and type at present required. With the passage of time, the whole character of the population—and not only that of individual families—will be changed.

In a normal population the number of people in different age groups varies only slightly over a period of years. Individuals are born and die, but the ratio of the age groups reflects only the gradual ageing of the population. The state of comparative equilibrium is reflected in the relative stability from year to year of birth, death and marriage rates.

In contrast, the numbers in the different age-groups on the estates will change so radically as to produce wide variations within a comparatively short period.*

In consequence, estates planned for young and largish families will in many respects not suit the future. As families mature, many houses will become too small; a little later, as families split up, an increasing proportion will become too large. As Diagram 2 shows, this effect was already in operation by 1939. On earlier estimates, the maladjustment between families and houses will by now have become more acute. The bulk of the children will have reached or passed the age of 10, at which sex separation for sleeping is required; a sudden increase of overcrowding may thus be expected. By 1950 an increasing proportion of the population will be elderly people, many of whom will not be able to afford the rents out of their pensions. Will they have to leave the estates? Or will special self-contained flats be constructed for them? What is to happen to those who can afford to stay on in Council houses but are occupying houses that are unnecessarily large?

A still more serious problem is just beginning to make itself felt. This arises from the natural expansion of the population and the regrouping of families which occurs as children reach marrying age. Houses will be needed for these new families. The estate families constitute the most rapidly increasing section of the community in Bristol, and the number of houses or flats needed will be unusually large.

Unfortunately, there are two difficulties in the way of providing the necessary houses in sufficient numbers. First, if Council houses continue to be allocated primarily in connection with slum clearance and the abatement of overcrowding, relatively few can be let to these newly married couples. Of the couples married at Filwood Church from 1937 to 1939, for example, not one appears to have remained on the estate after marriage. The tendency must be for them to seek accommodation off the estates in houses, or more often in "rooms" and quasi-flats; these are to be found mainly in the old districts, perhaps in the very areas from which the young couples moved as children. Here they will have to stay until such time as they have a family large enough to qualify for a Council house. As may be imagined, central accommodation is of very poor quality. Modern flats are almost non-existent and " rooms " (often called flats) are the only alternative. Where couples could afford a fairly high rent they had some chance of obtaining a Council house. The majority will never be able to afford much in rent, and will be able to afford less three years after marriage than at the time of marriage.

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* The cause of this has been discussed in Chapter IV.

The second difficulty is due to the widening discrepancy on the estates between the marriage rate and the death rate. The distribution of the population, age by age, shows that the need for houses for newly married couples will be very great when the main bulge in the estate population occurs in the 20–30 group, that is, in the late 1940's. The rise in the marriage rate will not be accompanied by a corresponding rise in the death rate, with the result that vacancies due to death on the estates will not cover the needs of new families. For some years the death rate will not even reach the proportion for the City as a whole, as the tenants selected for the Corporation houses have never included many of the older generation. If young couples are to be housed on the estates, extra houses will have to be built for them, irrespective of the policy adopted in letting vacant houses.

To develop social life on the estates and to safeguard the full development of young people brought up on them, it is vital that young couples should not be forced to leave the estates. There can be no doubt that the most pressing need is to provide better housing conditions for families with children, but such a policy, applied exclusively, is responsible for the present situation, and makes it impossible to achieve continuity of estate populations. In future schemes for clearing unhealthy areas, the separation of age-groups should, so far as is possible, be avoided. Housing provision can only be balanced by providing on the estates flats for old people, for the single and for the newly married.

Two separate problems face the Corporation. The first is to avoid the recurrence of the difficulties which have arisen from the selective nature of the transferred population. The second is to relieve the existing situation by providing on the estates homes for the newly married and the aged. Both problems can be solved by building self-contained small dwellings. For some time to come, the problem of housing large families will be important, but the main problem of the future is that of providing for smaller families.

On the sites where there is room for more building, flats and small houses can still be built; a certain number of flats for aged people have already been built at Filwood. On the older estates the range of house sizes is fixed for the life of the present houses. It might be possible here to meet the problem by converting some of the houses into flats, as well as by relaxing the rules against taking lodgers.

CHAPTER VIII

RENTS AND RENT POLICY

1. *The Factors Determining Rent Levels.*

Rent absorbs a considerable proportion of the incomes of lower paid working-class families. The level of rents charged for Council houses and the relation of these rents to family incomes and responsibilities are consequently of primary importance.

Rents for municipal dwellings are determined by three factors. First, by the cost of building and the expenses of administration and maintenance. Secondly, by the subsidy received from the Government and from rates. Thirdly, by the way in which the total rent to be collected is divided between tenants. The total annual expenditure on housing must be covered by the total annual income from rents and subsidies; within these limits the rents of individual houses can be fixed, since the 1935 Act, at the discretion of the Local Authority. They may vary according to the size and type of house, according to its value, according to the ability of the tenants to pay, or in accordance with any combination of these. The present chapter is mainly concerned with the way in which subsidies are apportioned.

2. *The Evolution of Rent Policy.*

The rent system as at present administered in Bristol results from historical circumstances. In the early years after the 1914-18 war, housing subsidies were given to stimulate production, in the same way as subsidies were given to sugar-beet producers. The primary object was to increase the amount of housing accommodation. A subsidy was granted for each house built ; whether one family benefited more than another was considered as of secondary importance.

In 1933, general housing policy changed to an intensive preoccupation with slum clearance. Since then, subsidies have been designed principally to enable badly-housed and poor families to live in healthier physical surroundings. This change of principle dates from the Housing Act of 1930, which permitted the amount of subsidy given to each tenant housed under its provisions to be varied in accordance with individual needs. The Ministry of Health (Circular 1138) stated in relation to this Act : " It is the clear intention of Parliament that the benefit of the new grant shall not ensue to persons for whom it is not needed . . . rent relief should only be given to those who need it, and only for so long as they need it."

The Act of 1935 allowed the principle to be extended to cover subsidies received under all previous Acts. Until then the revenue and expenditure accounts for the houses built under each Housing Act had to be kept separate, which had led to a considerable variation in the rents of similar houses built at different dates. The 1935 Act, in permitting the pooling of all subsidies and costs, required only that the total revenue should balance the total expenditure on housing. As a result each local authority was enabled to standardise its rents and to use subsidies in the way thought to be most appropriate.

Logically, the Ministry of Health principle that subsidies should be used to provide rent-relief implies a completely new rent policy. To conform, subsidies should be allocated not on a per-house basis, but directly to individual families in accordance with an elastic system of rent rebates. An alternative would be some system designed to lower and standardise all rents, leaving abnormal poverty to be dealt with through non-housing channels. In towns where such schemes have been introduced, the normal practice is to grade the houses according to their size and amenities, and to fix a standard rent for each group of houses. These standard rents bring in a total sum which covers the total costs of building, maintenance and administration. The subsidy is then used to grant rebates to those who cannot afford the standard rates. The rebates are normally calculated on fixed scales, taking into account such factors as family income and family size. Some local authorities, as at Leeds, take account of additional transport costs caused by moving to an estate. This policy establishes a direct and uniform relation between rent paid and ability to pay.

There has existed, however, another method of complying with the new purpose of government subsidy established under the Housing Act of 1935, which makes it possible to achieve a working compromise between the new and the old rent principles. This method makes use of the existence of groups of houses at rents fixed at different levels to secure that subsidies go to those most in need. New tenants are granted houses at low, medium or high rents, according to their means. Although necessarily imperfect in its results, this compromise avoids the practical difficulties inherent in breaking up established rent structures and in changing over to a new rebate policy. For that reason the majority of local authorities, including Bristol, have adopted this alternative.

The Act of 1935 placed upon local authorities the new duty of abating overcrowding in their districts ; this has somewhat complicated the situation. Overcrowding can often be traced to poverty ; if families, already poor, are moved to larger and more expensive houses, some system of rent allowances can hardly be avoided. We find in Bristol, for instance, that a simple rent allowance scheme has been introduced to meet the circumstances of such families. This scheme should be distinguished from a general rebate policy ; from many points of view it is to be preferred.

3. *The Rents of Corporation Houses in Bristol.*

Whether Bristol's Corporation houses have a parlour or not, each normally contains three bedrooms. As a result of the varied financial provisions under which houses have been built, rents ranged in 1939 from 7s. 9d. inclusive to 13s. 10d. for non-parlour houses and from 13s. to 17s. 1d. for parlour houses. The distribution of rent levels may be seen from Table 17, overleaf. For the purposes of this Table, parlour and non-parlour houses have not been separated and the small proportion of flats are included.

TABLE 17

INCLUSIVE RENTS OF DWELLINGS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE (at 31st March, 1939.)

Inclusive Rents	Houses and Flats let at 31st March, 1939	
	No.	Per cent.
Group A.		
Less than 7s. 6d.	360	3
7s. 6d. to 8s. 5d.	2,259	15
8s. 6d. to 9s. 5d.	217	2
9s. 6d. to 10s. 5d.	476	3
Group B.		
10s. 6d. to 11s. 5d.	1,826	13
11s. 6d. to 12s. 5d.	4,025	28
Group C.		
12s. 6d. to 13s. 5d.	1,010	7
13s. 6d. to 14s. 5d.	1,782	13
Group D.		
14s. 6d. to 15s. 5d.	1,177	8
15s. 6d. to 16s. 5d.	882	6
16s. 6d. and over	254	2
Total	14,268	100

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

As will be seen, there are four main rent strata. The largest number of houses (28 per cent.) have rents of 11s. 6d. to 12s. 5d., 15 per cent. have rents of between 7s. 6d. and 8s. 5d., 13 per cent. have rents of 10s. 6d. to 11s. 5d., and another 13 per cent. of between 13s. 6d. and 14s. 5d. The rents charged for all houses, except those provided for the relief of overcrowding, are still based, roughly, upon the system which was compulsory up to the passing of the 1935 Act. Subsidies are attached to houses in accordance with the particular Act under which they were built, and rents vary with the cost of construction at the time when the houses were built. Between the wars the cost of building tended to fall. The result is a fairly direct relationship between the date of building and the level of rents. The most expensive houses are those built first, under the 1919 Act. The medium rent houses were built under the Wheatley Act, and those let at 7s. 6d. to 8s. 5d. consist almost entirely of houses built under the 1930 and 1936 Acts for rehousing families from the slums and from overcrowded areas.

The rents do not bear any strict relation to the size and type of the house except that parlour houses always cost more than non-parlour ones built at the same time. In some cases the earlier higher-rented houses have bigger gardens and a more " exclusive " position, but often houses in the same street and in very similar surroundings have different rents.

In placing a new tenant the Bristol Corporation Housing Committee makes a rough estimate of the applicant's capacity to pay, and provides a house at a rent most suitable to his current income. In this way, by fitting the tenant to the house, use is made of variations in economic rent to achieve some approximate accord between means and needs. The whole structure, which has survived largely because it is easy to administer, appears at first sight to be somewhat arbitrary in application. It is interesting to see, by analysis of the results at the time of the Survey, how it has worked in practice.

4. *Rents and the Standard of Living.*

Table 15 in Chapter VII shows the results of this system upon the distribution of families in houses. Table 18, on the next page, which shows the standard of living of tenants paying rents of varying sizes, indicates the extent to which an economical and equitable distribution of subsidy has been achieved. These Tables are based upon information collected in the Sample Survey in the summer of 1937.

The standard of living, as calculated in Table 18, relates to the week preceding the survey investigation ; results therefore allow for the effects of unemployment upon family circumstances. The families are grouped in two-shilling groups since the number involved is not large enough for the single-shilling groups to be shown.

TABLE 18

CORPORATION HOUSES

RELATION BETWEEN RENTS AND STANDARD OF LIVING (SUMMER 1937.)

Standard of Living*	Percentage of Families Paying Weekly Rent				All Corporation Tenants
	Under 10s.	10/– to 11/11	12/– to 13/11	14/– and over	
Comfortable	4·9	2·8	4·2	14·0	5·4
Sufficient	37·7	39·2	50·3	62·3	45·7
Insufficient	29·0	44·8	30·8	18·3	32·5
In Poverty	28·4	13·2	14·7	5·4	16·4
Total	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0
Number of Families..	162	181	191	93	627†

* For Definitions, see Appendix 2.

† Data from Social Survey.

This table excludes 15 families, comprising:

Lodgers in with family	6
Shops	3
Living rent free	4
Living at uneconomic rent	1
Details unknown	1

The figures show a clear relation between rent and standard of living. The families paying rents of less than 10s. were distinctly poorer than those paying 10s. to 12s. The group paying 14s. or more was markedly better off than any of the other groups. This indicates that the letting policy of the Council has, broadly, been quite successful, much more successful than the relation between rents and incomes would seem to indicate. There are, however, a number of anomalies. For example, 5 per cent. of the families in the lowest rent group, paying under 10s. per week, were comfortably off. Most of these families were paying between 7s. 6d. and 8s. 5d. only ; in view of the shortage of low-rent houses, it is likely that other poorer families had a better claim to them.

At the opposite extreme, there were an appreciable number of families burdened with rents which were beyond their means ; these families were in need of further rent assistance. The incomes of nearly 24 per cent. of those paying 14s. or more, and of 45 per cent. of those paying between 12s. and 13s. 11d. were below sufficiency level. In one family, for example, whose principal earner was a leather cutter, the wages brought home were 52s. 6d. ; this had to support a wife and five children. In this case the rent was 13s. 4d., which brought the standard of the family below the poverty line. An even more glaring case was that of a monumental mason working in Clifton and living at Hillfields, with a wife and a child of two, who was paying 5s. a week in transport out of wages of 40s. His rent was 12s. This family was well below the poverty line. Although both families were saddled with houses beyond their means, it is of course possible that they had been better off when they first moved into their homes.

There are two main reasons for the wide variations in the rents paid by families with similar means. First, at the time when tenants are being allotted houses, a house at the most suitable rent may not be available. The choice of houses is restricted. There is no continuous range of rents to choose from. As Table 17 shows, the houses are concentrated in widely separated rent groups. Moreover, the cheapest houses are only available on the two sites (Filwood and Southmead) used mainly for rehousing families from slum clearance areas. If families, for reasons of distance to work or for social reasons, do not wish to live on these estates, they forfeit their chance of a house at a low rent. Again, at any one time most vacancies are in newly built houses, whose rents are all of one level. In consequence, families moving from clearance areas tend to be given the new cheap non-parlour houses whatever their incomes, since houses at higher rents will not be vacant in sufficient numbers.

The second reason for variation lies in the way in which the rent structure has grown up. The older houses are the more expensive, and as a result the tenants transferred in recent years could be given new houses at rents which would have involved the local authority in a loss before the 1930 Act subsidies came into operation. Even before national attention was concentrated on slum clearance, the policy of the Corporation was to rehouse, as far as possible, large families and poorer families living in bad conditions. Among these tenants were some with incomes no larger than those of families qualifying for 7s. 9d. houses, and with similar family responsibilities, who were paying 11s. and 12s. for 1924 houses. New tenants, unemployed at the time of moving, would be given the later and cheaper houses. Older residents, however, who had the misfortune to become unemployed, would still have to pay the higher rents attached to their older houses.

5. *Conclusions.*

We may conclude that at the time of the investigation the rents of few Council houses were directly related either to their size or to the incomes of the tenants. The minority which were used to rehouse overcrowded families were related both to family space requirements and to family means. As a method of distributing subsidy in accordance with needs, this system appears to have three major disadvantages. First, it discriminates arbitrarily between tenants through variations in the rents of houses built at different times. Secondly, it prevents the most economic use of subsidies, owing to the restricted range of houses vacant at any particular time. Thirdly, it takes no account of the changing economic circumstances of tenants or of the assistance required by large families to enable them to live in large enough houses.

It is difficult to decide whether on balance the advantage of adopting a rent rebate scheme would outweigh the disadvantages. The advantages have been described above ; the principal disadvantage is probably the fact that it involves a Means Test. An adequate scheme of family allowances will help those families which most need help. In order to avoid penalising large families, the cost of a suitable house must clearly be met by the State, either in the form of direct family allowances or by means of special housing subsidies.

In addition, some method of rent relief ought perhaps to be available in order to tide families over periods of distress, caused, for example, by sickness or unemployment. Here again, however, the proposed national scheme of insurance is a more direct method of achieving this object.

Between the wars the newer, and in some respects better, houses commanded rents lower than those built before 1930. With building restarting, prices are found to be greatly inflated. At the same time the intention is to adopt, from the first, standards of space and equipment higher than those obtaining previously. In spite of every effort to keep building costs low, the economic rent for new houses will be higher than it was before the war. As a considerable proportion of the new housing will still be needed to provide for families displaced from poor central districts, individual rents will clearly have to be subsidised more fully than before.

Many delicate problems remain. Houses now let at higher rents tend to be in the more exclusive parts of the estates ; the allocation of these houses to poorer and larger families would certainly encourage some of the older residents to leave. The Corporation's income from rents would consequently decline. The Housing Authority clearly wishes to avoid this, and if for this reason alone, it is likely that future housing schemes will have to be designed to appeal to varied income groups.

The present position in Bristol, in which houses provided for the abatement of overcrowding are let in accordance with one set of rules while the others are let in accordance with another, will become increasingly difficult to justify. At the same time letting policy based upon this duality will become steadily harder to administer if the average social and economic grade of estate tenants continues to fall. Rent relief must be maintained in some form until all families can pay an economic rent. When standards of living rise to this level, and not until then, will the knotty problem of rent policy have found its solution.

CHAPTER IX

FAMILIES LEAVING THE ESTATES

1. *The Rate of Migration.*

The population of the estates was constantly increasing before the war as new houses sprang up ; new faces were appearing every week. At the same time many people were moving away again. Sometimes these were individual members of families, young people growing up. This form of migration was becoming increasingly important ; unfortunately it is very difficult to find out how many separate individuals leave, why they leave, or the effect of their departure upon the age structure of the population.

There is also a steady annual migration of whole families. The following Table shows the extent of this migration.

TABLE 19

ANNUAL VACANCIES ON THE ESTATES AS A PROPORTION OF ALL CORPORATION HOUSES

Year ending 31st March	Number of houses vacated	Houses vacated as a per cent. of all Corporation Houses
1936	715	5·8
1937	722	5·7
1938	653	4·9
1939	625	4·3

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

It will be seen that, in each pre-war year, five out of every hundred families were leaving the estates. It is important to establish what types of family did not settle down and their reasons for leaving the estates. Removals may be influenced by several factors, dissatisfaction with the estates, desire for social improvement, response to economic or domestic motives. During 1935–6, 715 families left the estates. In the spring of 1937 a sample of 200 of these families were selected for interview. The names and addresses of the families, together with all the particulars concerning them in the Corporation records, were furnished by the Housing Department. Of these 200 families, 114 were successfully interviewed.* Their comments on the estates and houses were recorded, and details were obtained of the housing conditions of each family before moving to a Council house. The number of rooms occupied at the time of the interview and the amenities and conditions enjoyed by them were also noted.

The number of families is not large, and only general conclusions can be drawn. The large proportion of untraceables is bound also to bias the findings, as untraceables contain a high proportion of less desirable tenants, while the families interviewed were predominantly the better-off and more solidly established. Twenty families, 10 per cent. of the whole sample, were given notice to quit by the Housing Committee, and of these families only three could be traced. Thus seventeen out of thirty-two untraceables were families which had received notices to quit.

In most cases only the wife was at home when the interviewer called ; the opinions expressed about the estates therefore give more weight to the point of view of the housewife than to that of the husband or children.

2. *Types of Families Leaving.*

The tenants who had left and who could be subsequently traced for interview proved to belong very largely to the better-off class on the estates. No less than a third of them were skilled manual workers. Foremen, manual workers in supervisory positions and blackcoated workers together composed 54 per cent. of all leavers interviewed. Blackcoated workers, never very numerous on the estates, showed the strongest tendency to leave. While forming only 6 per cent. of the total estates population, they accounted for 16 per cent. of all those in the sample of leavers.

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* Of the remaining 86 families, 25 had left the city, 15 had left no address with the Housing Committee, and 32 had either moved once again or had given a false address. These could not be traced. Another 14 refused to give any information.

The traceable migrants were on the whole better off than estate tenants in general, but not substantially so. About half had sufficient income, as defined in the Survey, 42 per cent. had to struggle to make ends meet and 8 per cent. were below the minimum needs standard. While relatively better off than most Corporation tenants, and mostly assured of a regular wage, they were by no means prosperous. The predominant number of families (57 per cent.) contained one adult male earner, almost invariably in employment. It would be difficult for families whose earners are unemployed to leave the estates even if they are dissatisfied. The move costs money, and unassisted rents may be higher elsewhere. There is a marked tendency for families to leave when the children grow up and begin to earn. It is then that they both feel most acutely the need for an extra room and are in a position to pay for it.

The families leaving the estates in 1935–6 may be taken as typical of those migrating from the estates in recent years ; no special factors operated in that year except perhaps that slum-clearance was proceeding very rapidly. According to this evidence, the estates were being depleted of the more educated and intelligent population, and to a lesser extent of the better-off families. Both the economic and the social level of the estate tenants was falling, not only as the result of progress in rehousing slum families, but also through the removal of the older residents.

3. *How They Liked the Estates.*

Every town-bred person who moves out to a distant suburb finds it hard at first to settle down. This particularly affects women, who have to spend their whole time on the estate. There is no doubt that shopping is more tiresome and less interesting, as well as requiring more care. Distances in general are an inconvenience, people miss their friends, the organised social life and the general town amenities. There may be other increased expenses to worry about.

There is some compensation for the loneliness and difficulties on the estates in the pleasures of a new house with a garden, of the fresh and healthy atmosphere of the estate. Gradually social life does develop ; churches, chapels, clubs and perhaps a branch library or other institutions are established. This is a slow process. Sea Mills, for instance, one of the earliest estates, got a branch of the Public Library only in 1934. Distance will always remain a problem; the town atmosphere and amenities cannot be replaced, although good, cheap transport can make them more accessible. Slowly, the gaps caused by severance from friends and organisations are filled.

The enquiry made it clear that the people in this sample—who, as we have seen, were not typical of estate tenants as a whole—had adapted themselves to suburban surroundings and were able to live there more or less contentedly. About two out of every three families in this interview sample had been either very pleased or quite satisfied with the environment on the estates. Many more had been so before the changes produced by slum-clearance. It is noticeable that those leaving the older estates, Sea Mills, Shirehampton, Bedminster Down and Knowle Park, were particularly sorry to do so. Most of the families had lived on the estates for some time, the average length of residence being approximately five years.

4. *Reasons for Leaving the Estates.*

The fact that the leavers were mainly of a high occupational and social grade, while their average standard of living was not high, would seem to indicate that their decision to leave was at least partly actuated by reasons of social prestige. This is very understandable when allowance is made for the strength of our social traditions; it certainly cannot be altered by moralising. On the other hand the prominence of this particular motive often obscures the real reasons for removal, which in some cases are the result of a number of latent causes, merely precipitated by a particular event. Those who leave in order to buy a house provide an example. They may wish to do so because the family is growing up and they want to have a parlour-type house; it may be that they want "somewhere we can call our own"; it is equally likely to be due to a latent dislike of the decline in social composition of the estate brought about by transference of families from the slums. In cases like this it has seemed best to try to pick out what appears to be the main strand in the motivation; these reasons are classified in the following table:—

TABLE 20

REASONS FOR LEAVING THE ESTATES

Reason Given	Column 1 Families interviewed in Special Investigation		Column 2 Same Families questioned by Housing Committee		Column 1 minus Column 2
	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Per cent.
1. To buy a house	17	14·9	39	34·2	−19·3
2. Domestic reasons	20	17·5	12	10·5	+ 7·0
3. Dislike of estate (chiefly of neighbours)	32	28·1	12	10·5	+17·6
4. Distance from work ..	21	18·4	10	8·8	+ 9·6
5. Distance from centre and friends	6	5·3	8	7·0	− 1·7
6. Business reasons	3	2·6	5	4·4	− 1·8
7. Ill-health	8	7·0	11	9·7	− 2·7
8. High rents	5	4·4	4	3·5	+ 0·9
9. Other reasons	2	1·8	3	2·6	− 0·8
10. Address unknown	—	—	7	6·2	—
11. Notice to quit	—	—	3	2·6	—
Totals	114	100·0	114	100·0	—

It will be seen that the principal reason given for leaving was dislike of the estate as such, and particularly the dislike of neighbours. The population was said to be too mixed. The next most frequent stated cause was distance either from work or from the centre and from friends. A substantial proportion left for domestic reasons; of these, most did so unwillingly.

One of the most interesting results is the very big difference between the reasons extracted during the enquiry and the reasons given to the Housing Committee by the same families. A comparison between the two brings out very clearly the ambiguity of the phrase "to buy a house." In the Housing Committee figures, the dislike of neighbours is effectively masked, perhaps because it is easier to give the simple and less easily criticised pretext of wishing to buy a house than to express the underlying cause for deciding to buy a house and thereby to leave the estate.

Complaints about neighbours came mainly from families at Southmead, Knowle and Horfield. The older inhabitants were evidently leaving these estates through a feeling that the invasion of people from the slum areas was spoiling the atmosphere. Some families who had moved to these estates quite recently and had been placed among uncongenial neighbours had also left again on this account. Occasionally this may have been due to snobbery. Sometimes it was clearly no more than a question of " address " ; an instance of the latter was given by families who moved from Knowle Park because of the reputation of Knowle West (Filwood Park). Much of it, however, has a far deeper basis. The mixing of classes in very close proximity is resented for many reasons which were often openly stated at the interviews.

One objection was the difficulty of bringing up children decently when those of neighbours are completely uncontrolled and have quite different and often unmentionable standards of behaviour and language. Noise, quarrelling of adults, dirt, breakages, gossiping and prying were among other complaints. A sense of isolation also results from living among people whose habits differ from one's own. As one woman expressed it : " The estate is all right for those with standards similar to the majority, otherwise one is strained and feels lonely." Apart from a general improvement in standards, these difficulties can only be avoided by grouping houses for tenants of similar habits in small, though coherent, sub-units.

It is easy to think of all families with approximately the same incomes as constituting a single uniform class, but experience indicates numerous rifts and social distinctions. These are based partly on what appear to be very small wage differences. More important factors are differences in the standard of education, the type of work and, particularly, in the degree of security enjoyed. It is not pleasant to be reminded of persistent insecurity by having as neighbours casual or unemployed workers, whose worries and cares are unavoidably infectious. On the positive side, a regular job makes planning and orderly living a possibility, and enables parents to look ahead to a prospect of bettering themselves and their children. To some extent, family size cuts through these economic and occupational distinctions. In certain groups large families are more or less normal; childless families or those with single children are thereby embarrassed by the curiosity of their neighbours, and in self-defence retaliate with counter-insults. Although these social frictions may appear inadequate grounds for leaving the estate, it is easy to see that they could breed discontent, a feeling of not belonging, even before the noise made by the children or other more material factors would operate.

In the early days of slum clearance, it was possible to intersperse a few of the families from the slums among the older residents, but the size of the later invasion changed the quality of the problem. Every evidence seems to show that, wherever possible, similar families should be put near to one another to form small groups, even though one estate should contain many different types of social group. Alternatively, opportunity should be provided for families to sort themselves out on the estates. The Housing Department has tried to achieve this, but it is a complicated matter and as yet is only in the experimental stage.

While it is important to give cohesion to small groups of families, the sense of family isolation would be reduced by the provision of some machinery for self-government and by greater encouragement to the development of Social Centres. An estate committee, elected by the inhabitants, could deal with the complaints of those families who had obnoxious neighbours. Such a committee could pool requests for removals, thrash out difficulties of adjustment and attempt to settle them amicably. Personal differences are magnified on the estates by the absence of a social cement.

Second only to the irritation caused by neighbours was that due to excessive distance from work and the centre. This is especially acute on early estates, such as Sea Mills, but is in evidence on most estates. A high proportion of those leaving Southmead and Horfield, as well as Filwood Park and Fishponds, gave this as the main reason for their decision. Although earners are principally concerned, married women are also affected by their remoteness from the central shopping areas. In spite of transport costs, some still return to the shops which they used before moving. A wife will also wish to maintain fairly constant contact with her parents, with whom perhaps she and her husband shared a house before getting their own home on the estate. She may go long distances almost every day in order to visit them, until in the end she finds the journey too long and begins looking for a house closer at hand. Distance from the central hospital was also occasionally given as a reason for leaving.

Leaving an estate in order to buy a house is a natural stage in the development of prosperity. It is a little surprising, however, to find families leaving for reasons of health. It appears that the mists and damp coming from the river at Sea Mills are liable to cause or aggravate bronchial trouble, and that the clay subsoil at Southmead and Fishponds is bad for rheumatism.

Most of the families who left in search of a lower rent were responding to a deterioration in circumstance caused, for example, by the death of the husband. One or two had returned to central districts to regain the benefits of cheap shops. One woman who said " we starved up there," and gave her budget, was actually paying a rent of 9s. in her present house as against 7s. 6d. in the estate house. The extra 1s. 6d., she held, was more than repaid by the lower cost of living in the central area. She mentioned in particular the cost of fuel consumed in a Council house. Both the enquiry and other conversations suggest that annoyance at lack of variety in the shops on the estates was an even more important factor. Restricted choice makes both shopping and the resulting meals much duller ; as these are the most interesting parts of the housewife's work, the mental deprivation is keenly felt.

It is remarkable that little mention is made of loneliness, although some imply it in complaints about their neighbours, and others express a desire for more social life. Perhaps the need is not clearly formulated in people's minds. Only one young couple mentioned that the estates did not supply the life and mental stimulation which they needed. One or two others obviously could not accustom themselves to the suburban atmosphere, and on returning to the centre were delighted to be " in the thick of things " again.

In general, the houses, as such, were appreciated. " They're champion," was one woman's comment. Criticisms were made, however, of the planning of the downstairs rooms; there were complaints about draughts and of alleyways in terrace houses. The washing and bathing facilities were not to the liking of everyone.

5. *Housing Conditions after Removal.*

On leaving the estates most of the families had moved into new or otherwise fairly good houses. One-third of the total number were buying their houses with assistance. Nearly all were paying more for their accommodation than they had paid on the estates; 16 per cent. were paying either the same or slightly less. In most cases, this extra payment involved substantial sacrifice.

The houses taken by 12 per cent. of the families appeared to be of inferior quality. The families living in them were for the most part those who had felt too isolated on the estates and who had returned to the centre of the city. Twelve per cent. were found not to care properly for their houses; these also mainly consisted of families who had felt lost on the estates. There is no means of comparing this percentage of feckless families with that in the city as a whole, but it does not seem likely to be very different.

Of the families interviewed 16 per cent. had been overcrowded before going to a Council house, none were overcrowded whilst there, and only one was overcrowded in its present home.

The results of this enquiry suggest that there is no reason to fear that the effects of good housing conditions on the estates are lost by a return to the older environment. The attraction of a parlour and the progression upwards in housing conditions is shown from the following facts. In not a single case did a family have a parlour before moving to its Council house without having had one since; for two families the sole experience of a parlour house was on the estates, while 45 families had a parlour for the first time since leaving the estates.

To put the same data in another way, 39 had a parlour before going to the estates, 37 had a parlour in their estate house, while 98 moved to a parlour-type house. These are facts of some significance, if only as an indication that the families questioned were mainly those able to better their circumstances.

Facts were also collected on bathrooms, which seem to suggest that a bath is considered less essential than a parlour, but is none the less widely appreciated. Before moving to the estates, only 37 per cent. of the 114 families interviewed had lived in houses with baths. While on the estate, each of these families had a bath in their house. On leaving the estates, 65 per cent. of families moved into houses with baths.

This evidence is little more than suggestive. As has been shown, the tenants leaving the estates were comparatively well off and therefore members of the income group most likely to benefit from the general upgrading of sanitary standards. On the other hand many of the families left Corporation houses to return to the home of a relative or a friend in which no bath existed. Others returned to central areas in which houses with baths are still relatively uncommon.

In spite of the need for caution, there is some evidence of the sustained influence of well-equipped Council houses.

CHAPTER X

THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF FILWOOD PARK

1. *Composition.*

The enquiry into the circumstances of tenants leaving the estates, described in the last chapter, threw little direct light on the extent to which families transferred from slum-clearance areas—constituting the majority of new Corporation tenants in recent years—have adapted themselves to life on the estates.

As the field for a special study, the Knowle and Bedminster Estate was chosen. Not only is this the biggest estate but also it is of interest in that it contains houses built soon after the last war as well as many built just before this war. At first sight its composition may appear well balanced; thus in Table 4 (Chapter III) it will be seen to have very much the normal proportions of parlour and of non-parlour houses. However, this appearance of normality does not bear closer inspection.

In reality, Knowle and Bedminster is not a single estate. For the purposes of this description it may be considered as two estates—Filwood Park (originally known as Knowle West) and the rest. Filwood Park was planned separately, and was by far the greatest single recipient of families displaced from slum or overcrowded property. This is shown in Table 21, below.

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF HOUSES AND FLATS BUILT TO REHOUSE PERSONS DISPLACED FROM UNHEALTHY AREAS, ETC., UNDER THE HOUSING ACTS OF 1930, 1936 and 1938 (to 31st March, 1939)

Estate	Houses and flats built	Per cent. of Total
Filwood Park	2,426*	69·0
Southmead	666	19·0
Horfield (Berry Lane)	186	5·3
Kingsley House	60	1·7
St. George	54	1·5
Hillsborough	48	1·4
St. Matthias House	74	2·1
Aldworth House (flats)		
Whitson House		
Fishponds		
Ham Green		
St. Philip's (Barton Road) ..		
All Estates	3,514	100·0

* Includes a very small number built in other parts of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate.

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, BRISTOL CORPORATION.

Before describing the results and conclusions arising out of the special study made in Filwood Park, it may be useful to quote one or two figures relating to the Knowle and Bedminster Estate as a whole, which it has been possible to extract from the general survey material.

Although the number of cases is not large, consisting of only 215 families, the results show a marked consistency and in the contexts in which they are quoted their meaning is unambiguous. It must be stressed again, however, that the sample covers the two extremes—of more prosperous early Corporation tenants as well as the families from slum clearance areas—and that it is not possible to distinguish these contrasting groups in the figures. To some degree the prosperity of the first group of tenants masks the extent of poverty among the second group.

2. *Standard of Living.*

The age composition of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate as a whole is very similar to that of the estates population generally, except that in 1939 a slightly higher proportion were under 15 years old.

The figures relating to the circumstances of children on this estate are, however, deplorable ; not only were the bulk of the children below the sufficiency level, but nearly half (45.0 ± 2.5 per cent.) were actually below the " poverty " line. These figures undoubtedly explain why a number of the children do not show the physical well-being which their improved environment should have ensured. Their poverty is more than neutralising the good effects of their better surroundings, and is thus the most important factor in their total environment.

The exceptional poverty of the estate was certainly due in part to the high incidence of unemployment or casual labour. Nearly one-quarter of the families on this estate were found to have heads who were either out of work or casually employed.

It is not principally the fact that these families were living on the estates which prevented them from obtaining more regular employment. With the steady clearance of the central slums poverty was being decentralised. At the same time, its incidence in some new suburban neighbourhoods is even more concentrated because of the congregation of families, normally with dependent children, from several scattered slum areas. The distress of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate (confined largely to the Filwood Park end) is hidden when the inhabitants are indoors, but is pathetically, almost ironically, obvious when they are out and about and thrown up against the background of their bright new homes. One family in four in the whole estate was living in poverty ; no similar concentration of poverty existed elsewhere in Bristol at the time of the survey.

The rehousing in one area of these families, which contain a high proportion of young people, presents considerable difficulties. Not only do they acutely miss the town and all its life, but they have fewer resources, either of money or of knowledge, with which to meet the demands of their new circumstances. Their poverty ties them more closely to the estate. They are more affected by increases in the cost of living and more dependent on the network of social services with which central districts are so much better provided.

It must be emphasised that the object of slum clearance should not only be to shift people from one house to a better one, but also to remove them to a healthier environment so that they can live more civilised lives. Slum clearance which fails to do this creates prejudice and may not result in the real benefit at which it aims. A new social organism cannot be expected to reach full development overnight ; it can only be achieved in a continually maturing environment. If the lack of suitable accommodation continues to force young people to leave when they marry, even when they wish to stay there can be little future for the estate as an organic community.

The success of the adaptation to a new environment can to some extent be measured by the improvement in the standards of cleanliness and hygiene. It is reflected even more directly in the extent to which people think it is pleasant to live there.

The following impressions are based upon personal observation over several months in 1939 when the investigator was living on the estate, upon contacts of various types with the families and upon discussion with social workers on the estates ; these included health visitors, club workers, ministers, relief workers and adult education tutors.

Social workers who have known Filwood over a number of years were agreed on the marked improvement which has taken place in cleanliness of the houses and in clothes ; the better housing environment has undoubtedly had a great educational effect upon the population. A disgustingly dirty house is now uncommon. These improvements cannot, of course, be ascribed solely to housing. As children grow up the material conditions as well as the psychological conditions of many homes improve. Where the father has been unemployed for years, a family may return to a more normal status and revive their self-respect as soon as the children begin to earn.

There is no doubt that living on the estates in many cases leads to an improvement in health. Nurses at the Bedminster and Filwood Health Clinics confirmed the opinion of parents that health benefits, particularly that of children. Nevertheless, many children show pathetic traces of lack of sleep and of proper food. This is partly the direct consequence of poverty, but it cannot be doubted that if mothers could enjoy more rest and more opportunities for education in hygiene and domestic economy, there would be a still greater improvement in child health. Child pneumonia and adult asthma are still far too prevalent. It is astonishing to find the smallest children playing and singing in the streets until well after ten on summer evenings. The lack of a resident doctor leads to delays in dealing with urgent cases of illness.

It cannot be denied that many mothers are feckless over housekeeping; the absence of husbands during the war, with the encouragement to wives to undertake part-time war work, will not have improved matters.

In normal times there was often no proper mid-day meal; the children were given a slice of bread or a penny to buy chips. Quantities of sweets were habitually eaten, no doubt to compensate for lack of nutrition. Tinned foods of all kinds figured prominently in the family menus. Now after the war, much could be done by the permanent provision of mid-day meals on the estates by maintaining British Restaurants or similar institutions; this provision would extend to other members of the family the benefits which so many schoolchildren already enjoy in term time.

Health workers have noticed that the health of mothers does not always improve as much as that of children. Sometimes the health of women even declines. It is suggested that the increased cost of living, of which the mother so often bears the brunt, as well as lack of harmony with the new social conditions and isolation, are largely responsible for this. It must also be conceded that, although the care expended on a new home is far more rewarding to a house-proud wife, this involves more work—particularly if it is larger than the old slum houses.

The attitude of the tenants on the estates and the reasons underlying their attitude are somewhat more difficult to assess than the physical results of their new environment. Most families appear reasonably contented with their new houses and would not wish to return to the centre, not at any rate into their previous homes. Some are very happy. Even those parents who cannot themselves get used to the estates are reconciled to them for the sake of their children. The houses are greatly appreciated. Most tenants enjoy their gardens, with the exception of families whose men do heavy manual work. The great majority of gardens admirably reflect the care taken of them ; when the lack of experience in gardening and of means to buy tools are remembered, the results achieved are still more impressive.

The pride which tenants take in their own houses and gardens does not, however, extend to the estate in general. An air of apology for living there is sometimes met. People often feel shut in and lonely. Women complain that they get melancholy in the winter months ; there is nothing to take them out of themselves. The atmosphere is very unsettled, and it has consequently proved very hard to win responsible co-operation from the inhabitants in any attempt to set up new organisations. The aimlessness of the young is particularly marked. These attitudes reflect the difficulties which people experience in adapting themselves to such a complete change in environment. No sudden conversion can be expected, but analysis of the difficulties may be helpful.

The first cause of maladjustment is the quietness and strangeness of the estate, inherent in the fact that as a suburb it is so different from anything to which tenants are accustomed. Neighbours are inevitably more separated ; there are no factories in the vicinity ; there is no through traffic. This emptiness is accentuated by the position of the Filwood Park area at the extreme end of the Bedminster Estate, largely surrounded by undeveloped land and socially isolated from the rest of the community.

It must be repeated that the Knowle and Bedminster Estate does not in practice constitute a single estate ; Knowle Park and Filwood Park were each planned separately. Between these two areas there is no real centre ; the nearest approach to one is Melvin Square. Those living at Knowle Park shop at Knowle Park and only very rarely at Filwood Park ; similarly, those living in Filwood Park rarely visit Knowle Park. The shops at Filwood Park cater only for the everyday necessities of the poorer local families and are consequently limited in number and range. The stimulus afforded even by looking at clothes and articles destined for wealthier purchasers is absent at Filwood Park.

The social integration of Filwood has been seriously impeded by the steady arrival of fresh residents as new houses were erected. The number of houses built and of families moving to the estate, in each year between 1932 to 1939, was as follows : 60, 112, 196, 463, 427, 108, 188, and 872. As was shown in Table 21, of all houses erected under the 1930 and 1936 Acts, 69 per cent. were erected on the Knowle and Bedminster Estate. At the outbreak of war, rehousing activity was at its highest level. It is hard to build up group activities when population and environment are changing so rapidly. The steady immigration, together with the abnormal social, economic and age composition of the population, invalidate any hope of a rapid solution to the problems in this area. It will take many years for the families to settle down. Slow progress can be expected ; much will depend on the extent to which children can be drawn into organised activities on leaving school. Adaptation would improve with more continuity of residence. Meanwhile, the provision of more amenities in making the estate more self-contained and in reducing the incentive to go elsewhere for leisure activities, would have a beneficial social effect. Lack of self-government in this community immediately strikes the visitor from an established town of comparable population. Such a visitor is amazed to find that there is no equivalent to his local council, no Mayor, no real centres of activity.

3. *Amenities now in Existence.*

It was in 1932 that the first tenants came to Filwood Park ; for some years this treeless plateau was very inhospitable to its residents. The removal rate was high.

The poverty of the families was often extreme ; this prevented the spontaneous development of a satisfactory social *milieu.* The rapid extension of the work of voluntary organisations was limited by finance. By the end of March, 1935, when about 3,000 families* had moved into Filwood Park, the amenities consisted of ten small shops (three leased by the Co-operative Stores), a temporary church and institute and a Baptist Chapel. On the plateau, remote from Filwood itself, there were two mission churches, one with a hall attached, and also a branch library. There was no relief agency to help in emergency or sickness. Except for buying essential foods and cleaning materials, it was necessary to take a long and strenuous walk into Bedminster or else to go by bus by a roundabout route which cost 6d. return. A similar journey was needed to visit the nearest place of amusement.

The sense of loneliness and neglect was reflected during this period in acts of adolescent hooliganism and crime which won for this district the bad name from which it still suffers. The stigma of this reputation has left a lasting impression on the tenants, and has undoubtedly prejudiced people's willingness to move there. Better-off families still prefer to settle in Southmead.

During the three years before the war, conditions improved considerably. The area now had the population of a small town. By the 31st March, 1939, very nearly 2,500 houses had been built on the Knowle and Bedminster estate for rehousing families displaced from slums, and Filwood Park had a population of something like 12,000 people. This development brought advantages as well as drawbacks ; by the outbreak of war the atmosphere of the estate was beginning to approximate to that of a small town. The activity of voluntary bodies, for example the University Settlement, was steadily increasing and the Corporation was taking a more active interest in the provision of amenities.

The following bodies had by 1939 established branch buildings or offices in the district :—

A. *Religious Organisations.*

Church of England (Permanent Church).
" " " (Permanent Institute).

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* About 1,000 of these families came from slum clearance areas.

Baptist Chapel.
Roman Catholic Church and School.
Convent of the Brethren.
Salvation Army.

(It is understood that a Methodist Church is projected, and that the Church of England intend to build a second place of worship.)

B. *Social and Welfare Organisations.*

Bristol League of Civic Service.
Corner Cottage Club.
Unemployed Welfare Association
(Broad Plain Settlement has reserved a site.)

C. *Municipal Institutions.*

Social Centre (used as a School during the war).
Casualty Station.

(Use is now made of the Baptist Chapel as a Health Clinic ; the provision of a proper Clinic in Filwood Park is clearly overdue.)

The Corner Cottage Club was started in 1935 as a Branch of the University Settlement in co-operation with the Juvenile Organisations Committee. The resident warden was the pioneer in organising social occasions and clubs, and before the war, as Secretary of the Community Association, was succeeding in ventilating the needs of the area. The house next door to the Corner Cottage was taken over as a small hostel to enable social workers to live on the estate. In 1935, somewhat late in the growth of the estate, the Corporation recognised the need for special action at Filwood Park to stimulate and to supplement the work of voluntary bodies and to provide some focus for what was rapidly becoming a wilderness of houses. Plans for a municipal social centre, and for the equivalent of the High Street of a market town were approved in 1936. This street, called Filwood Broadway, was designed to contain several shops and branches of multiple stores, as well as a cinema ; its completion was interrupted by the war.

A large and well-equipped Social Centre was opened in May, 1938. Designed for recreation and social life, it includes rooms which voluntary associations could hire, as well as a fine hall with dance floor and stage, a gymnasium, canteen, meeting-rooms, skittle alley, workshop and reading-room. The building could accommodate activities for all ages, one side of the quadrangle being designed for the use of adults and the opposite side for the use of juveniles ; the hall and gymnasium complete the square. The exigencies of war have, unfortunately, closed most of these amenities ; since the centre was taken over by the Education Committee, weekly dances have provided the principal social activity. The statement sometimes heard that it was a failure appears to be based on a somewhat wilful misinterpretation of the fact that as an institution it had not yet had time fully to find its feet. Although open to criticism in respect of its planning, it was satisfying a real need. It is to be hoped that it will soon again be fulfilling its original functions. The occasion of the opening of the Centre was wisely chosen for re-naming the district Filwood Park, to replace the earlier name of Knowle West, which had achieved a certain notoriety throughout the city.

The Cinema was opened at the beginning of 1939. Apart from its primary function, it can be hired for other purposes, such as cookery demonstrations. The estate now also possesses one large public house,* the Venture Inn, which has an entertainment hall. Without discounting the theory that there is less rowdyism in small pubs, it must be said in justice that the Venture Inn provides a social centre and meeting-place of some importance. Probably the local population is not large or dense enough to support other commercial entertainment enterprises.

The erection of the Centre, of these extra shops and of a cinema, has brought a remarkable change in the life of the estate. There can be no doubt that by 1939 Filwood was well served in comparison with other parts of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, and even more so in comparison with the rapidly growing Southmead Estate. The latter had no resident social workers ; it has not yet a cinema, although there are two not far away. Medical services are inadequate, and the Community Association had, until 1939, been without quarters. In that year it was given a Council House as temporary accommodation. This Southmead Association, however, does not yet appear to have any real roots in the estate.

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* A second small public-house was opened just off the estate last summer (1945).

Southmead is even more isolated from central shopping areas and central entertainments than Filwood Park.

4. *Amenities still needed.*

The adequacy of facilities at Filwood Park can only be judged in relation to the size of the population and to its age composition. One Anglican Church, one cinema and one public-house for more than 12,000 residents represents less than a bare minimum of amenity. The growth of the estate is not yet complete ; without further provision the position would get worse. In a town serving a population of this size, the higher density and greater diversity of income groups would support probably two cinemas and five pubs ; the central area of a larger town would attract many more.

The characteristic amenities of a central area are absent ; shops in particular are lacking, and the social centre can hardly act as substitute for all other needs. Those amenities, such as parks and other open spaces and recreation grounds, which could have compensated for the absence of urban attractions, are lacking. There is little on the estates, either natural or man-made, to make the inhabitants feel proud or to stamp the area with its own character. The name of Filwood Park is deceptive ; in reality there is no park there, no public gardens, and in fact no public open space at all* except for one or two small decorative green squares theoretically barred to the public.

Open spaces are badly needed ; at present there are only streets for people to walk, to take their children, or to get away from their families. It is astonishing that children should be forced to play on the streets on this estate just as in any central slum district.† Private gardens are quite inadequate as playgrounds for older children. Moreover, they cannot be used both for growing vegetables and for playing in ; for financial reasons, the former alternative has often to be chosen. Small squares and play-corners at frequent intervals, together with a large central open space with paddling pools, swings and other amusements could well have been part of the original design, particularly of areas in which large families are to live.

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* In contrast, there are two recreation grounds at Knowle Park. Recently, attention has been directed towards providing rough playing-fields at Filwood Park.

† A local minister remarked that the Air Raid Shelters at least took children off the streets—"as they enjoy climbing."

For adults there could be a place for open-air amusements, providing something to watch or to do, and a bandstand for occasional summer concerts. In most London parks, at least in peacetime during the summer holidays, there are free children's concerts, concert parties and band performances for adults. Some have evening dancing and a lido. It would surely be possible to provide something along these lines, on however modest a scale, on an estate as large as Filwood Park.

The estate has one nursery school with eighty places and a long waiting list. There are no crèches, though their provision would enormously ease shopping and would enable women to take a more active part in evening social life. The cinema serves as a substitute nursery on a Saturday morning and afternoon, when there are cheap children's performances. Parents have been quick to seize this chance of sending their children to the " twopennies " as soon as they can walk, so that shopping and visits to the city centre can be undertaken in comfort. While the investigator was living on the estate, a little boy of three regularly took his sister of one year and a half to the cinema. Although several doctors maintain surgeries on the estate, only one lives there.

The dearth of voluntary organisations has already been mentioned. Apart from the difficulties of finance there is the persistent problem of finding leaders among a population unaccustomed to responsibility and raw to the district. Those who did belong to organisations, social, technical or political, in their old district, maintain contact with them for some time instead of joining or starting organisations on the estate. Often similar interests are not catered for on the estates. There is the constant problem of keeping pace with the increases in population, and with the preponderance of certain age-groups. In the past few years, juveniles have predominated ; during the war these will have become adolescents or will have married.

The provision of shops has consistently improved, and there will be a further improvement on the completion of the Broadway. Due to low incomes and to insecurity, many families live more or less from hand to mouth, and can rarely afford to lock up money in food. They may need the cash for some emergency, and food bought in bulk, although cheaper, is eaten too quickly. Small local shops are clearly needed to cater for these shoppers, whose particular difficulties will persist in spite of advances in social security and in decasualisation of work.

It is demonstrable that before people are rehoused, the exact nature of their life in the older locations must be understood. Many planners have failed to appreciate the implications of living in central areas. A knowledge of the institutions upon which urban populations rely for amusements, for convenience and in time of need, is of primary importance as a guide to the amenities required in new neighbourhoods. This knowledge gives an insight into the nature of an environment which appeals to the tastes and imagination of town people ; it is up to the planners to retain the advantages of this environment and at the same time to eliminate its faults. Prejudice against urbanism as such is not an attitude calculated to lead to organic planning.

The experience of Filwood Park strengthens the conviction that at least the basic amenities should be provided from the beginning. Filwood Park had been opened for seven years before the cinema was built. These years are so critical to the tenants' attitude and social health that an alert housing authority is virtually forced to speed the development of such amenities. The alternative will be lasting prejudice against estates in general. The Corporation has already taken steps to help voluntary associations to obtain premises. This is of great importance ; a non-resident organiser or social worker is only half as valuable as a resident. A cinema may not at first be able to pay its way, and it may in the first instance be necessary to subsidise it. Even temporary buildings for such purposes are better than none.

It may be suggested that while an estate is in its early stages, the social isolation of the population could be reduced by the provision of very cheap or free transport to the central areas. Although this might delay development on the estates, it would enable families to revisit old friends and relatives, to shop cheaply and to enjoy an occasional outing until the local population could support local activities.

In planning amenities for an estate, every effort must be made to supply variety of choice. One big pub is often a poor alternative for three small ones. If public-houses are not considered expedient on moral grounds, then other institutions should be devised to replace them. Why are there no billiard saloons or milk bars ? This emasculation of entertainment has without doubt deprived Filwood of much social life and amusement.

The difficulty of making commercial establishments pay seems to have been over-stated. Even though the population is poor, there is little of the competition found elsewhere. Possibly the objections would be overcome by an initial subsidy and better siting. If the main shopping centre, the public buildings, amusements and central pubs had been planned in the centre of the Knowle and Bedminster Estate, instead of at the far end, the area served would have made possible a much more generous scale of development, beneficial to both ends of the estate. At the same time it would have helped to break down the isolation between the populations of the two areas.

Experience at Filwood emphasised the necessity for detailed planning of estates as a whole ; this could have avoided the neglect of parks and public gardens. Such mistakes are not likely to occur again.

In institutions and commercial entertainments the Filwood Park area should have hoped by now to have been independent of outside areas. In practice, churches and chapels, local shops, cinemas, clubs, dance halls, fun fairs, as well as pubs, hardly exist on the estate. It is in these circumstances, denied its traditional institutions and amenities, denied the life and variety which course through the veins of a central area, that a neighbourhood feels the full burden of its own poverty.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSIONS

Corporation Estates: Achievements, Difficulties and Limitations

It is perhaps inevitable that any authority which embarks for the first time on an ambitious programme of housing will make serious mistakes. Mistakes did occur in most areas between the wars when, for the first time in our history, local authorities undertook the great social task of housing the people. With consistently limited finance and with restricted powers, it is to the credit of local authorities that so many of them, like that of Bristol, should have achieved so much progress in their immense task between the wars. During this period, the number of houses in the City was increased by over 15 per cent. in twenty years by municipal action alone. Although this is a considerable achievement it may be necessary to attain an even more rapid rate of building in the years following victory; under conditions of improved technique, finance and administration, it is certainly possible to do so.

The Corporation can now draw on the experience of twenty years of housing; in order to make the most of its new programme and to receive the full support of the public, the lessons learnt from past mistakes must be digested and applied. It is hoped that the morals pointed in the present study will be of interest well beyond the confines of this city.

Many failings are revealed by a study of the pre-war development of Bristol estates, but it is not the main object of this book to enlarge on the legal, administrative, financial and other impediments to a better policy. There is every hope that the growing national awareness of the importance of balanced development and of a successful housing policy will succeed in getting rid of such impediments. Those responsible for the future housing programme will probably be in agreement with many of the conclusions reached in this book. Certainly their intention will be to profit by past experience so far as local circumstances and national legislation permit. It is intended, for example, to adopt the neighbourhood concept in new estates ; this was all too absent in previous policy. Moreover, as increasing areas of the central part of the City are cleared, we are likely to see both the creation of open spaces and of zones developed at higher densities in the form of flats, whose tenants would have easy access to amenities which are difficult or impossible to provide on the outskirts. It is also believed that there will be substantial changes in national rent policy. Finally, the adoption of a system of family allowances will greatly relieve the pressure of rent on large families.

The principal conclusions outlined in this chapter are all subsidiary to one obvious truth. No improvements in planning, no amount of Corporation activity, can alter the fact that the ultimate ability of people to afford decent houses, even if subsidised, and their ability to support healthy community services, is dependent on national policy in the spheres of employment and social security. Again, only national policy in respect of building, labour and materials can prevent the cost of housing from remaining at an impossibly high level. Finally, inadequate legislation on land reservation and acquisition must bear some of the responsibility for the mal-development of isolated estates and cottage suburbs. The local authority is limited by and dependent upon national policy.

In the past, many unpleasant and unjustified attacks have been made on municipal enterprise in housing, sometimes by interested persons. There was even some tacit non-cooperation amongst ratepayers. At the same time, criticisms can often be traced to the fact that the municipalities clearly start at a financial disadvantage if they are only able to cater for poorer people. This limitation may be altered as a result of the almost universal shortage of houses, and as a result of dissatisfaction with the single class estate.

Six main conclusions can be drawn from the argument contained in this book ; these may be summed up as follows :

1. The need for less segregation of estates from the life of the city as a whole.
2. The need for less isolation of the poorer section of the population on the estates.
3. The need for more flexibility in fixing densities on new estates.
4. The need to encourage self-government on the estates.

5. The need for more attention to *real* living space requirements.
6. The need for a revised system of rent control and rent standardisation.

It will be useful to consider each conclusion separately.

The First Conclusion.—The need for less segregation of estates from the life of the city as a whole.

Existing estates, through geographical position, high cost of transport and their dissimilarity from the rest of the town, have suffered from physical isolation. This isolation has inhibited the development of real community functions. It is reflected in the extra cost of living on many of the estates, and in the lack of amenities, from pubs and clubs to tennis-courts and shops. The adoption of open development has added to this sense of isolation, especially among housewives who had been in the heart of the city and were therefore accustomed to living closer to both neighbours and friends. The new estates do not appear to form effective communities. It takes many years before branch libraries, cinemas or pubs begin to penetrate to the estates. The great variety of persons and institutions which animates a city can never be reproduced in the suburbs, and is kept beyond the reach of suburban tenants by the excessive cost and trouble of getting into the central areas.

This isolation would be eased by reducing transport charges to the estates. There is no final solution, however, unless the estates are planned as communities, with a far greater degree of social and economic self-sufficiency. The systematic rebuilding of blighted central areas will also make it possible to rehouse many families near to their old homes and thus to minimise dispersal to far-off points on the city periphery.

The Second Conclusion.—The need for less isolation of the poorer section of the population on the estates.

There is an unnatural predominance on the estates of larger and poorer families. This concentration is bad both for them as individuals and for the estates as social units. The poor family suffers most by isolation from the city centre. The evil effects of forming whole estates of such families are so evident that steps must clearly be taken to avoid a repetition. It appears, however, that the answer is not to ignore class distinctions in the location of families. On the one hand families from condemned houses should not be dumped singly between other types of older residents ; on the other hand they should not be herded together into large groups. These families are larger than the average, containing 4.4 persons per family on the estates as against 3.4 in the whole city. A third of all Bristol's working-class children live on the estates and their isolation in uniformly depressed communities means the retardation of development amongst a substantial proportion of the city's young life.

The fact that post-war rehousing will start by catering for people without houses, whatever their class, may lead to a decrease in this class isolation through the development of mixed estates. In view of the large number of working-class central areas damaged by bombs, however, there is a danger that plans for development will be divided too sharply between ex-slum and ex-residential areas. If this separation goes so far as to prohibit the mutual sharing of urban life and amenities by the different classes the result will be social malnutrition, a disease which can be quite as demoralising as physical starvation.

It is of course unrealistic to attempt to house widely different income classes in the same street or group of houses. An estate of from 12,000 to 20,000 persons should, however, cater for a fairly wide variety of income groups, all of whom would share social amenities, shops and halls, even though certain groups of houses or streets, no less than shops and pubs, would grow up under the patronage of better-off residents. An estate cannot be called a miniature town if the income distribution within that estate is quite different from that found in a normal organic community.

The welding of mixed income-groups into one social unit can be achieved by planning small groups of houses within the estate, each suitable for the tastes of a particular section of the community. Each small group would be self-sufficient for immediate day-to-day needs. Moreover, houses can be grouped to avoid the usual lack of children's playing greens or squares. The provision of children's playing-space would be a less emphatic problem in a mixed estate, because there would not be the same unbalanced age structure as occurs when all the poor are housed together in splendid isolation. The development of estates to suit a variety of income groups would therefore involve the provision of housing accommodation not only for these groups as such, but also for more single persons, more aged persons and more young childless couples.

Apart from the cultural and social benefits of mixed communities their adoption would raise the general level of income and expenditure on the estates. This in turn would render voluntary groups and organisations more able to support themselves and would encourage a greater variety of shops and amenities. At present no professional families, except for clergy, live on the estates. The result is that, although the Knowle and Bedminster Estate is as populous as Salisbury, yet little boys wandering the streets of the former in the evening have little chance of meeting their headmaster or other teachers of their school. However hard it may be to induce the ordinary middle-class family to live in mixed estates, it should be impressed on teachers, doctors and others whose professional duties lie with the estate population that to live on the spot is part of their responsibility to the public which they serve.

Third Conclusion.—The need for more flexibility in fixing densities on new estates.

One of the worst effects of the pre-war legislation which limited development to twelve houses to the acre was the creation of sprawling estates, with a comparatively small population spread over a large area. This was even more unfortunate as the new inhabitants were mostly accustomed to central neighbourhoods developed at high densities. In future it is likely that, where appropriate, permission will be given to develop more densely. As a result it will be possible to adopt a more flexible approach, with densities varying in accordance with circumstances. This will lead in some cases to higher density development.

In the past, the exclusive adoption of sparse development has implied a lack of flats on the estates. The houses are so spread out that walks up to twenty minutes, even to visit shops (with no seats for tired mothers when they go shopping) are inevitable.

There is nothing new in adopting flat development in appropriate areas ; we have many examples, outstandingly that of the Quarry Hill

Flats estate at Leeds. Moreover, one may hope in the future for greater initiative in planning terrace estates, as at Kennington and Coventry. It also appears that the adoption of three-storey houses with part of the ground floor reserved for private storage and for access to the back garden would save considerable space.

The allocation of space for children's playing-grounds would be facilitated by terrace development, and gardens could be provided for any family who elected to have one. The provision of flats would add to the overall density of population without increasing spacial overcrowding. Moreover, flat development provides a useful focus for the grouping of shops and other amenities, such as cinemas and pubs ; space can be spared for these amenities from the ground saved through building flats instead of houses.

If single estates are to support a full range of amenities, a residential community of at least 30,000 people is needed. The alternative is to link each estate with others and to connect the whole system with the city centre by good transport arrangements. Fairly large numbers are required within a given area in order to support such things as swimming-baths, golf courses, bowling-greens and tennis courts. Branch libraries, cinemas, halls and clubs all tend to receive inadequate support in a population like that at Filwood Park, which is at once too poor and too widely scattered to give them an economic basis.

Filwood Park has wisely been provided with a higher density area of shops and flats, at the Broadway, but this is of course a very small part of the whole estate.

Fourth Conclusion.—The need to encourage self-government on the estates.

The lack of community life in estates results from the three deficiencies which have been discussed above, i.e. geographical isolation, class isolation and the laws controlling density. There is, however, a need for a more positive policy in encouraging the development of a community ; the present section suggests some principles by which local authorities should be guided in attempting to build up social life on new estates.

The emergence of an estate as an integrated social unit cannot be brought about by the provision of communal buildings, however lavish these may be. In the first instance their value will remain restricted until the control and responsibility for them is identified with the resident population. This does not exonerate local authorities from the responsibility for providing suitable buildings. On the contrary, experience shows the necessity for such provision as part of the original building programme. The balance of evidence is, however, against continued municipal control of these amenities once they have been provided ; every encouragement should be given to the building up of strong democratic bodies on the estate capable and proud of managing their own affairs. People dislike to think that some paternal outside authority is trying to teach them how to be pally when mutual help is a virtue which they were practising generations before new estates were planned. In the long run, inhabitants alone can build up their own community life ; for this reason, although they fully appreciate their debt to the local authority for meeting the initial capital cost, it is a healthy sign if they view such municipal enterprise as the necessary preliminary to their own assumption of responsibility and control.

The procedure too often adopted is to saddle communities with buildings, sometimes unnecessarily grandiose, and then, on the grounds that they are not used or liked, to import outside " foster-parents " who are prone to run them in a spirit of abused charity. This is calculated to do damage in every direction. In the first instance, a social centre should be kept of quite modest size, embodying halls and committee rooms which can be let to clubs, societies and sports organisations. Let the community, at its birth, inherit this social centre and have complete control over its development. In this way there is every hope of inducing spontaneous interest ; in due course expansion should be facilitated by making assistance available in proportion to the scale of local efforts. If a tenants' association on a new estate does not throw up its own leaders, but instead has leaders thrust upon it, the spirit of self-government dies out. As every man and woman who has worked in factory and field will testify, it is seldom true that leaders cannot be found. Capable men and women leaders are present in any substantial gathering of persons ;

districts have found their own Air Raid Wardens, and streets have found secretaries for their Savings Groups. The suspicion of outside paternalism will always tend to drive these leaders into sour opposition to estate government. The qualities of leadership may be more easily found in the mixed estate than in the uniform community as there will be a greater range of educational and occupational types, but with suitable encouragement the qualities of leadership can emerge from the least promising material.

At the same time, full time social workers will continue to be in demand ; these are likely to be more readily accepted if they live on an estate. It is admittedly very difficult for them to identify themselves with the rest of the community in a genuine spirit of equality. Condescension—the slumming mind, as it has been called—tends to reveal itself in workers of this kind and where this happens it prejudices normal citizens against all forms of welfare work. It must be recognised that prejudices against welfare workers are easily aroused. For example, a minority of school attendance officers give the impression of ignoring family difficulties, or of using their position to interfere with or to pry on home life. Like that of other welfare workers, theirs is a very difficult task, but results can be disastrous if it is undertaken without imagination or social understanding.

On balance there can be no question that a Warden appointed in a new estate, or connected with the Social Centre, can be of great service. She or he can encourage leaders, can act as the ears and eyes of the estate and can in a hundred ways serve the residents. This is the need—that they should serve the estate and not aim at the parental rôle. A suitably qualified Housing Manager can give much valued domestic advice, legal guidance and social leadership on the estate. Co-ordination of independent activities, liaison between estate organisations, suggestions for development, discreet advice, support for individuals wishing to voice justified discontents, and sometimes public statement on issues affecting the estate, these are the functions of the Housing Manager. The appointment should carry a good salary, adequate staff and the maximum of independence from Corporation control.

Fifth Conclusion.—The need for more attention to real living space requirements.

The size and type of houses built should clearly bear a close relation to the size and type of families to be accommodated. As the reader will remember, 96 per cent. of Corporation houses were three-bedroom types,* and most of them (67.8 per cent.) were non-parlour houses. Until 1936 large families were frequently put into unsuitable accommodation ; even after this, overcrowding was frequently relieved more on paper than in practice.

It is not a very difficult matter for the housing authority to discover the approximate sizes of families to be catered for—and their likely variation in size—for several years ahead. Foresight in this direction has been sadly neglected. Special needs—for large families or for estate doctors, for example—have been largely ignored.

Even more serious has been the reluctance to provide dwellings suited to persons who need only one or two rooms and can afford only a low rent. In the main, these persons fall into three categories. First, there are the young married couples ; it has been a most unfortunate aspect of housing policy in the past that, as children brought up on the estates have reached the age of marriage, they have been forced to leave as there are no suitable houses for them.

The second group are the aged, who have their own special problems. Public attention has been focussed on their needs through recognition of the fact that they constitute an increasing proportion of the population.

There is, however, a third group whose requirements have probably received insufficient emphasis. These are the single persons of all ages. It is hardly logical for the Corporation to forbid its tenants to take in lodgers without at the same time making other provision for these lodgers. A supply of single-room dwellings would without doubt satisfy a real need.

The surplus of females in a city like Bristol emphasises this need. In 1931 there were nearly 27,000 more women than men in the city ; due to the war this disproportion has probably further increased. There were then 57,000 unmarried persons between 20 and 40 years of age, of whom 31,000 were women. Actually, in 1931, 138,492 Bristolians, or more than a third of the total population, lived either in lodgings, alone, or in families of one to three persons. These numbers would be even greater if elderly persons were not so often compelled to share with married children, for lack of suitable alternative accommodation.

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* See Chapter VII.

At the lowest estimate there are between 50,000 and 100,000 persons without close family ties, many of whom would prefer to live by themselves and could probably most suitably be accommodated in flats. To-day they live either in rooms, in rooms converted into so-called flats, in " digs," or with relations. Many of them would appreciate large central blocks of flats ; provision of flatted houses and small blocks of flats would be particularly appropriate for older persons and for newly married couples. The adoption of multi-storey development not only makes it possible to house more people in the same area. If well planned it may lead to an actual increase in the open space per inhabitant, and will certainly give an increase in useful open space.

It is no less important that living space within the individual home should be adequate and planned for maximum utility. Except in the case of larger families (e.g. families of more than five) this will not involve the provision of more rooms than are at present required by law. The size of rooms may require reconsideration, but the basic need is to increase the amount of usable space. Upstairs rooms would be used much more if they could be economically heated. A reduction in the drudgery and cost of heating, which would make it possible for families consistently to heat more than one room, would therefore greatly reduce crowding downstairs. For the first time, modern methods of central heating make this an economic proposition.

In addition, it seems clear that, in calculating space for overcrowding purposes, the living-room should be excluded as being unsuitable for sleeping purposes. Children from the time of their birth take up as much space as the ordinary adult and, as soon as is practicable, overcrowding standards should be raised to count infants and children as whole persons instead of the present maximum of half an adult.

It is to be hoped that the precedent of inviting public criticism established in the case of the temporary house designs will be maintained. The adoption of modern technical methods and of modern planning can add considerably to convenience of tenants without a corresponding increase in cost. The storage space and the equipment incorporated in the temporary house designs should not be omitted from any post-war houses. In particular, facilities for the storage and drying of clothes (such as napkins) away from the living-room, are needed. Expert Government committees have done much valuable work in preparing information on which adequate modern standards can be based. Many problems hitherto considered economically insoluble, such as the achievement of sound insulation, are well on the way to solution.

Post-war housing can play an important part in raising standards of living if from the start new basic standards are adopted. Planned homes —rather than minimum houses—will mean less ill-health, less housework and a generally higher standard of living.

Sixth Conclusion.—The need for a revised system of rent control and rent standardisation.

The structure of housing policy is founded on finance. National policy in providing loans and subsidies has the power either to energise or to cripple local housing initiative. On the other hand, the final arbiters of the success of a housing policy are those whose lives are affected for better or for worse by that policy. They will always be grateful for a new house, but gratitude will turn to disappointment and discontent if the rent precludes them from maintaining an adequate standard of life. It has been shown that the cost of living on estates tends to be above that in the central areas ; this is accentuated where there is a simultaneous increase in the proportion of income paid in rent.

The ultimate solution to rent problems, like that of all problems generated by poverty, is a general increase in the standard of living and in social security. Until this has been attained, it must be accepted that a substantial section of the population cannot afford to pay an economic rent.

Though at present subsidies are needed to achieve our housing target, they will remain a makeshift. Stricter control of building costs could play its part in reducing rents of future houses. It is widely believed that the centralised purchase of materials and equipment, together with national control of sources of building materials, such as steel and concrete, could effect substantial economies.

There is a clear call for differential subsidies as between one area and another. It is not equitable that towns with a long heritage of poverty and overcrowding should have to bear a greater burden of local taxation than more fortunate towns. A policy of special financial provision for the rehabitation of blitzed areas has been adopted ; a similar policy is needed for blighted areas. This is not the place to discuss at length the implications of the financial methods which post-war housing reconstruction will necessitate. It appears likely, however, that the trend towards national responsibility for the cost of rebuilding is still incomplete. Within a measurable time it may be possible to adopt a flat rate policy, irrespective of local costs ; this would bring housing into line with other services, such as that of postal delivery, which are financed on a national basis. Such a policy need in no way infringe the local authorities' administrative powers and responsibilities.

In order to ensure that the rents of suitable new houses are within the means of those for whom they are built, there will have to be some initial subsidisation. If this subsidy is divided impersonally among all tenants, without reference to their ability to pay, many tenants would still be asked to pay higher rents than they could afford.*

The normal argument, in these circumstances, is to fall back upon a scheme of differential rents determined by a Means Test. In this way it is possible not only to avoid charging rents outside the capacity of any family's pocket, but actually to vary the rent in accordance with changes in the family income.

Unimaginative rent rebate schemes have led to a feeling among working-class families paying relatively high rents for their new houses that they are subsidising even poorer families who manage to get the bulk of whatever subsidy is going. Since the alternative method of using the subsidy is to rebate all houses equally, or in proportion to their initial cost, there is some truth in the argument. Although no family is paying more than the economic rent and some are paying less, many anomalies remain ; for example, as was shown earlier, persons renting houses built in 1924, when building costs were still high, are paying more than persons of equal means in similar houses built later. This may happen irrespective of which family has the greater need of subsidy.

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* The continuance of the Rent Restriction Acts is in itself an admission that the bulk of working-class families cannot afford to pay economic rents.

To complicate the problem, many persons continue to pay high rents in old and often unpleasant privately owned houses, even though they cannot afford these rents without going short of other necessities. To subsidise these rents would have the effect of making the taxpayer or the ratepayer responsible for maintaining at an excessive level the rents charged for such houses, over which the public has no control.

There is no doubt that the reduction of rents for new houses to a satisfactory level will be one of the more serious tasks of the next few years. The shortage of houses cannot be overcome for some time and, without controls, will enable owners of property to exact scarcity prices. It is clearly against the public interest that this shortage should be exploited for the purpose of private profit.* Nothing less than an extension of the Rent Restriction Acts to cover all types of dwelling, together with rigid supervision of the costs of building, will suffice† ; these measures should be combined with the provision of a special national loan at a low rate of interest for housing purposes and with the utmost energy in prosecuting the rehousing programme. There is much support for the setting up of Rent Courts to adjudicate in difficult cases.

Any rent problems not covered by the above methods will be confined to especially large families or to families whose principal earner is unemployed or otherwise prevented from supporting the family. These should be catered for by provisions in security legislation, rather than by housing policy. Clearly an unemployed man's claim for relief should be varied according to the rent which he has to pay ; equally, the larger families, which are in any case more likely to be in poverty, should not be financially penalised for the fact that they require a larger house. The adoption of family allowances will supply the machinery for adjusting this anomaly.

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* Sir E. D. Simon in *Moscow in the Making*, describes how Moscow rents have been kept low in spite of the appalling chronic shortage of accommodation.

† This would repeat the policy adopted after the last war.

With these precautions it should be possible to overcome the problem of rents without imposing an undue burden on the nation.

Our Opportunity

In this chapter an attempt has been made to summarise the main principles which should be applied in planning and building post-war communities. An immense task lies ahead ; it has been estimated that in the next few years Bristol alone needs over 30,000 new houses. With this vast and urgent job to be tackled, mistakes will be avoided only if the lessons of the past are widely understood and applied. If this book has contributed to a general appreciation, especially among the Bristol public, of the facts on which future policy should be based, it will have achieved its purpose.

There have been other earlier tasks comparable in magnitude with the rehousing programme which now faces us. In this country we have too often drifted light-heartedly into them, armed with inadequate knowledge and not even infused with the ambition to build up that knowledge. This time we shall have less excuse for such mistakes. With the experience which has accumulated between the wars, and with the increasing awareness that social responsibility is not exhausted by the bare provision of shelter, we have the opportunity this time to create in our new estates a character more in keeping with the aspirations of our age than can now be found in any corner of England.

APPENDIX I

COMPARISON OF THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION IN CITY-OWNED HOUSES WITH THAT IN THE WHOLE SURVEY SAMPLE

The following figures refer to the date of the Survey, *i.e.* May–October, 1937.

Age Last Birthday (years)	Percentage of persons falling within each age group	
	Whole Survey Sample	City-owned Houses
0—4	7.5	10.5
5—9	8.4	15.2
10—14	8.9	14.4
15—19	8.4	10.1
20—24	6.8	4.2
25—29	7.7	4.9
30—34	8.9	8.8
35—39	8.1	8.8
40—44	6.7	8.1
45—49	6.2	5.6
50—54	5.8	3.6
55—59	5.1	2.3
60—64	4.6	1.3
65—69	2.9	1.1
70—74	2.2	0.5
75—79	1.1	0.4
80—84	0.5	0.2
85—89	0.2	0.0
90 and over	0.0	0.0
	100.0	100.0
Total No. of Persons included	15,141	2,853
Age unknown ..	39	2
Total	15,180	2,855

These figures are the basis for Diagram 2, at end of book.

APPENDIX II

STANDARDS OF LIVING

CERTAIN of the Tables in this book, which discuss the standard of living on the estates, adopt four levels, *i.e.*, Comfortable, Sufficient, Insufficient, and In Poverty. The method of assessment of these standards is described in detail in the study *The Standard of Living in Bristol*, by Herbert Tout, M.A. (Arrowsmith, 1s. 6d., 1938). For the convenience of the reader a brief and simplified description is here appended.

In measuring the standard of living of each family, the family income has been compared with a purely arithmetical calculation of its 'needs.' In this way allowance is made for the varying needs of families of different sizes and compositions. The needs have been assessed on cost basis; so much money has been allowed for food, so much for heating, lighting, clothes, and cleaning materials. In this way the minimum amount on which each family can live without actual malnutrition has been worked out. For details of the standard chosen reference must be made to the Survey report, but it may be said that the standard adopted is essentially based upon the traditional poverty lines of the early social surveys, chiefly defined by Professor Bowley, but that it has been modified in an upward direction, to provide for British Medical Association minimum diets. It is not in any sense an extravagant scale; no allowance whatsoever is made for sickness, savings, for old age or burial expenses, holidays, recreation, furniture, household equipment, tobacco, drink, newspapers or postage. This figure is compared with the family *net* income, *i.e.*, the total earnings of the family less expenditure on rent, transport to work and compulsory insurance.

A family whose net income falls below this minimum standard is poor indeed. Not only is the life of such a family a daily grind unrelieved by any margin for what are now accepted as necessities, but also in attempting to meet such contingencies as inevitably arise it is necessary to cut down on food, already assessed at the lowest figure consistent with reasonable nourishment. Families whose standard falls below this figure are described simply as *In Poverty*.

This level is so demonstrably low that a substantially higher income is needed before a family can be said even by the cynic to have attained a sufficient standard of living. For this reason families with an income up to 50 per cent. above their bare minimum needs are described as having an *Insufficient* standard of living. Those falling into this category, although not classed as in poverty, will be engaged in a perpetual struggle to make ends meet.

Next above in the scale of living standards are those families whose income being between 50 per cent. and 200 per cent. above their minimum needs, enables them to avoid hardship. By any but the most rigid standard, to describe such families as sufficiently provided for would be absurd. Relative to those actually in poverty, their standard is however *Sufficient* and they are therefore classified as falling within this category.

Finally there are the relatively prosperous working-class families, whose incomes are 200 per cent. or more above their minimum needs. They can afford holidays and moderate luxuries and they may be able to put by a little money. Their standard is described as *Comfortable*.

The standards can thus be summarised as follows :—

In Poverty	Below minimum needs.
Insufficient (families with scanty means, but not in poverty, which have a struggle to make ends meet.	Less than 50 per cent. above minimum needs.
Sufficient (families able to enjoy the ordinary standard of a Bristol working family)	50–199 per cent. above minimum needs.
Comfortable (families with a margin for holidays, savings and luxuries)	200 per cent. or more above minimum needs.

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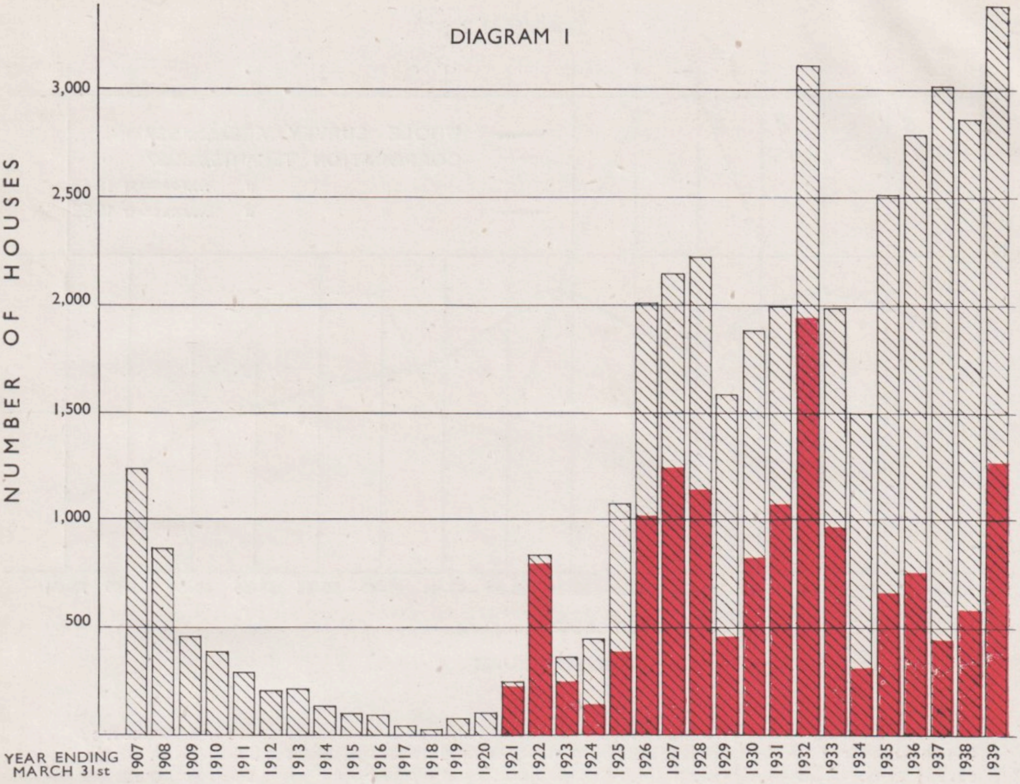
DIAGRAM I



KEY:

FULL HEIGHT OF COLUMN SHOWS TOTAL NUMBER BUILT IN YEAR

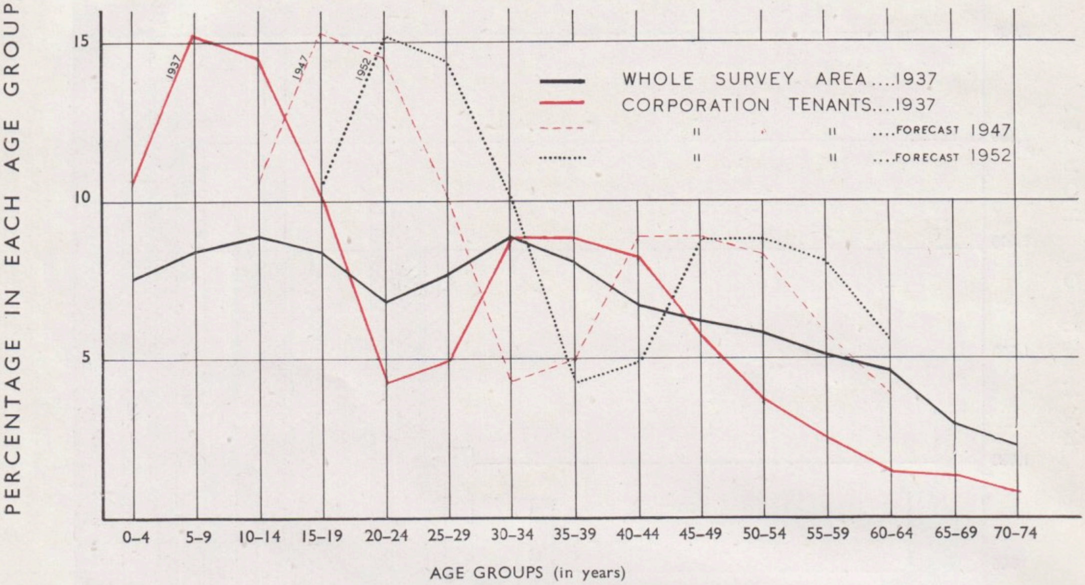
RED PART OF COLUMN SHOWS HOUSES PROVIDED BY THE CORPORATION

NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT IN BRISTOL IN EACH YEAR FROM 1907 TO 1939

The figures on which this diagram is based are derived from the last published report (1936) of the Corporation Housing Committee, and the last published report (1939) of the City Engineer. There are minor discrepancies between these figures and those supplied by the Housing Department which have been used elsewhere in this book.

Diagram I.

DIAGRAM 2



AGE STRUCTURES

This diagram shows two things. The thick continuous lines compare the age structure, in the summer of 1937, of the families living in city-owned houses with those living in the whole survey area. The thin broken lines are projected curves showing what the age structure of those living in city-owned houses will be in 1947 and 1952, on the assumption that there will have been no migration to and from the estates.

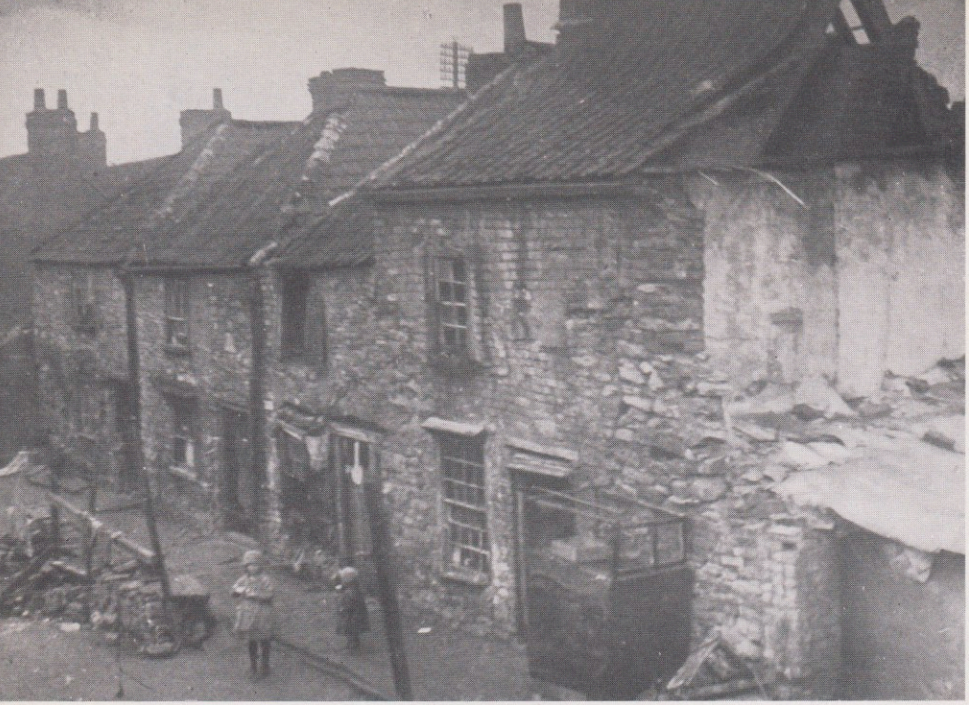
While the age structure of the whole survey sample is not likely to undergo a radical change, the diagram shows that on the estates there will soon be a preponderance of :

(a) Young adults, aged 20—30, many of whom will be recently married.

(b) Persons aged 45—65, many of whom will want a smaller house owing to the fact that their children will have grown up and left home.

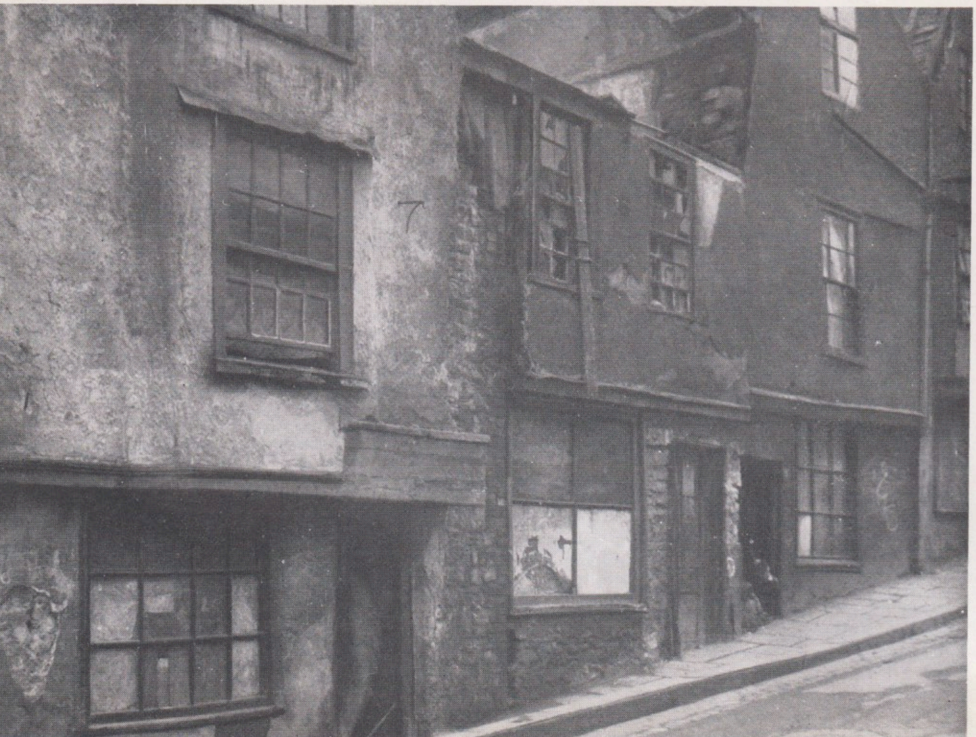
To satisfy the needs of both of these groups, a larger number of small dwellings than at present exists will be required.

Diagram 2.

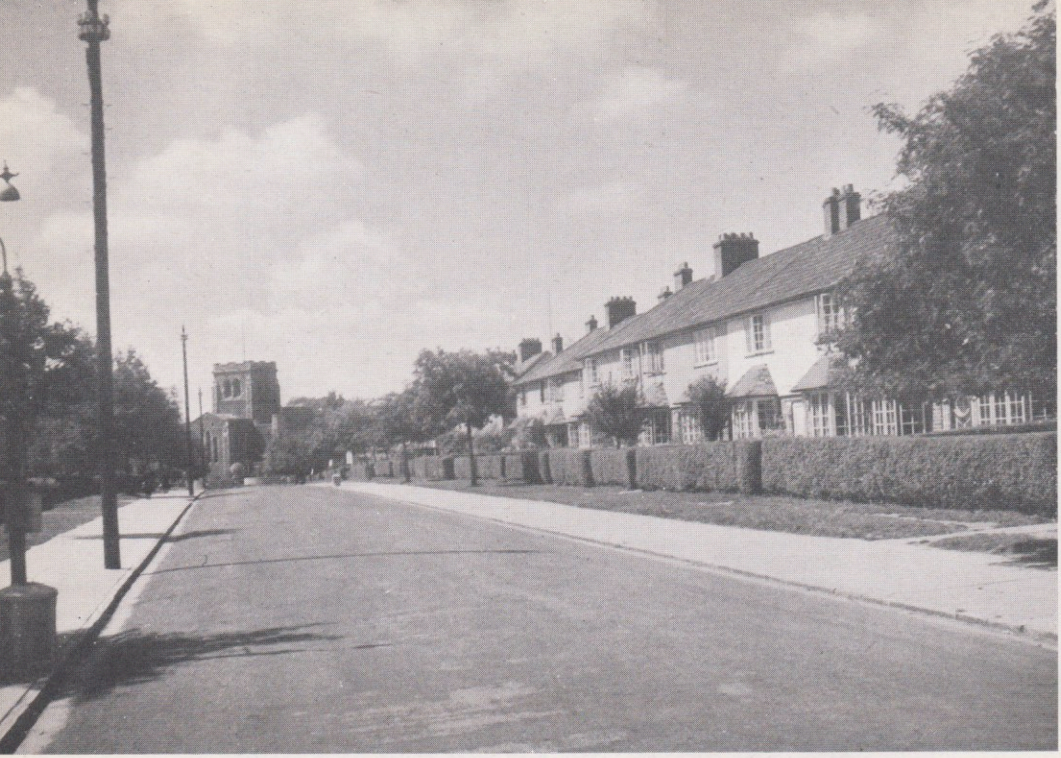


Church Road,
St. George.

These are a few of the houses which the Corporation has demolished in its slum-clearance campaign. Until they were pulled down shortly before the war, all the houses shown were inhabited.

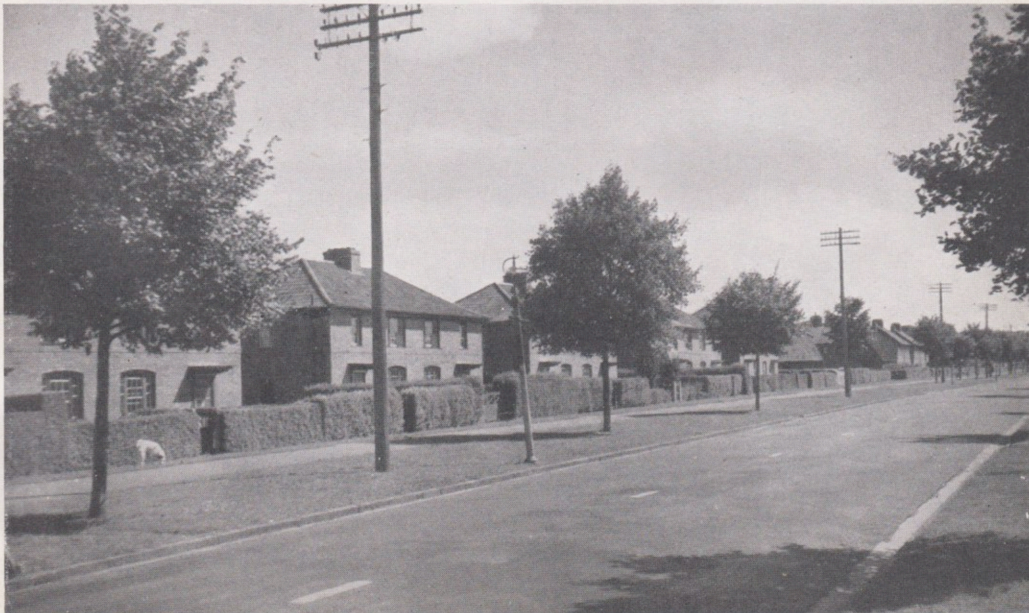


Frogmore Street,
St. Augustine's.

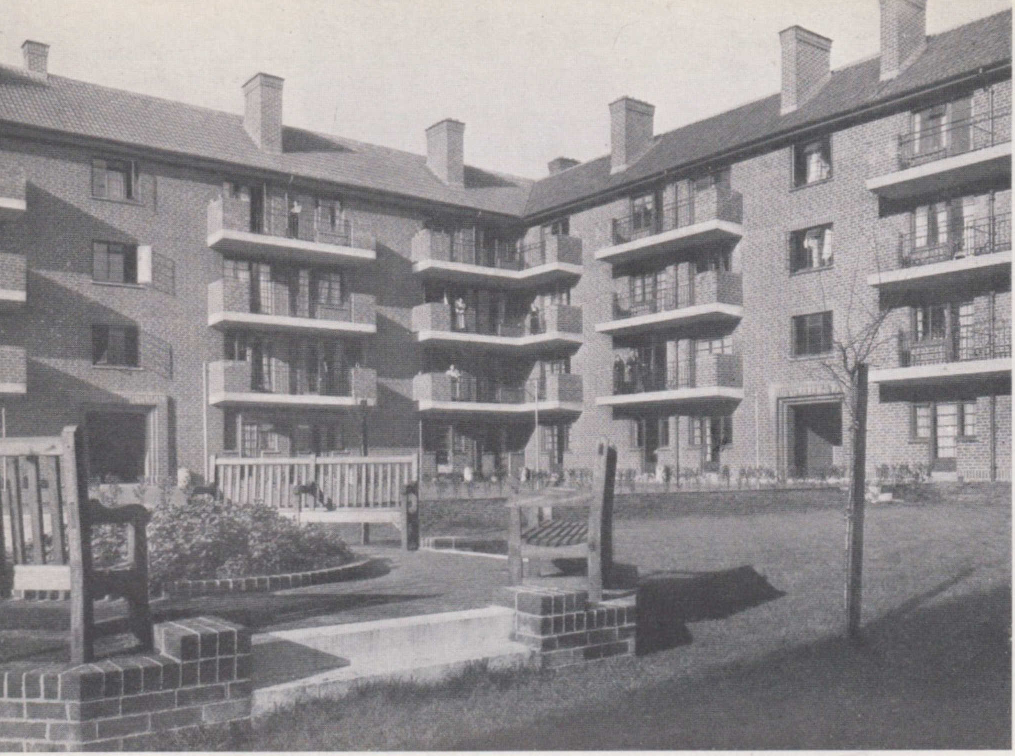


St. Edyth's Road, Sea Mills.

Immediately after the 1914–18 war, the new subsidies enabled the Corporation to launch its building programme. By now, the early estates look well established.

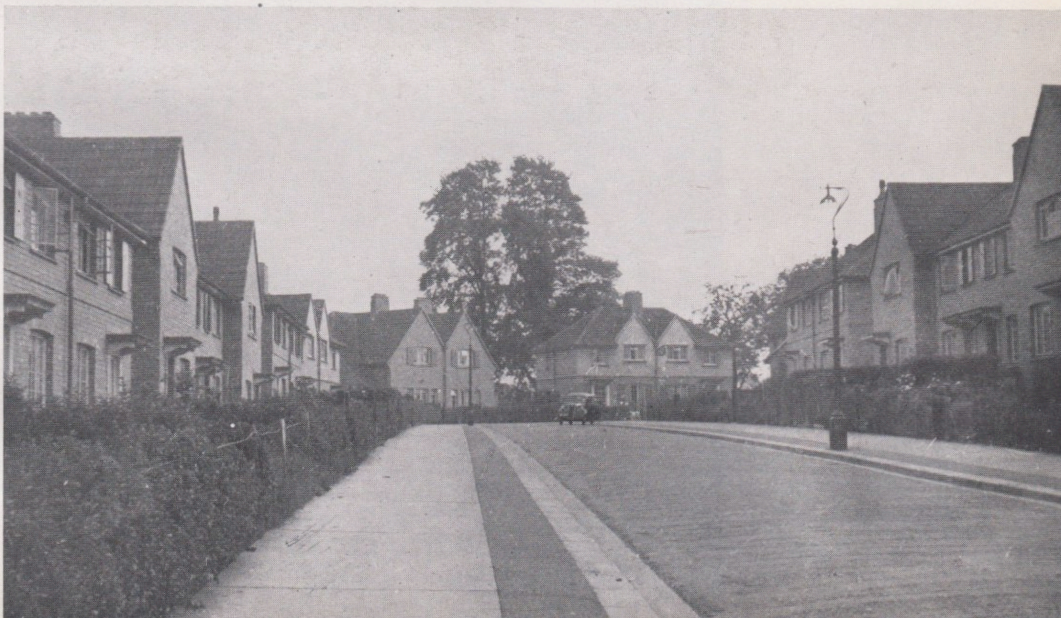


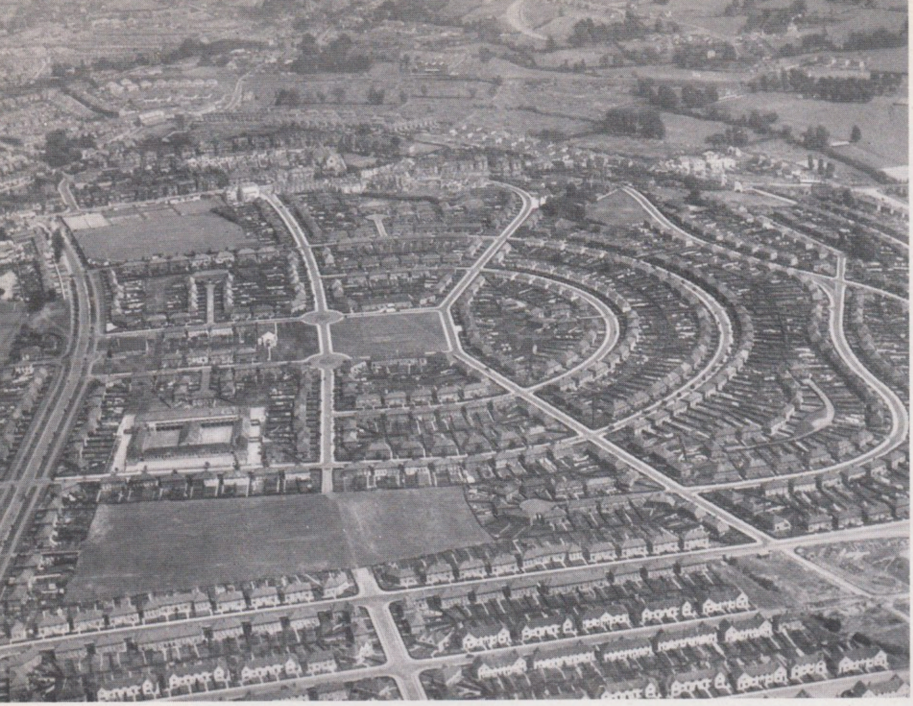
Broad Walk, Knowle Park.



Above—Kingsley House, one of the few blocks of flats built by Bristol Corporation in the centre of the city.

Below—This street might be on nearly any of the estates, though it has benefited by the survival of a few big trees. The houses shown are mainly in blocks of four, which give almost the effect of a continuous street front.

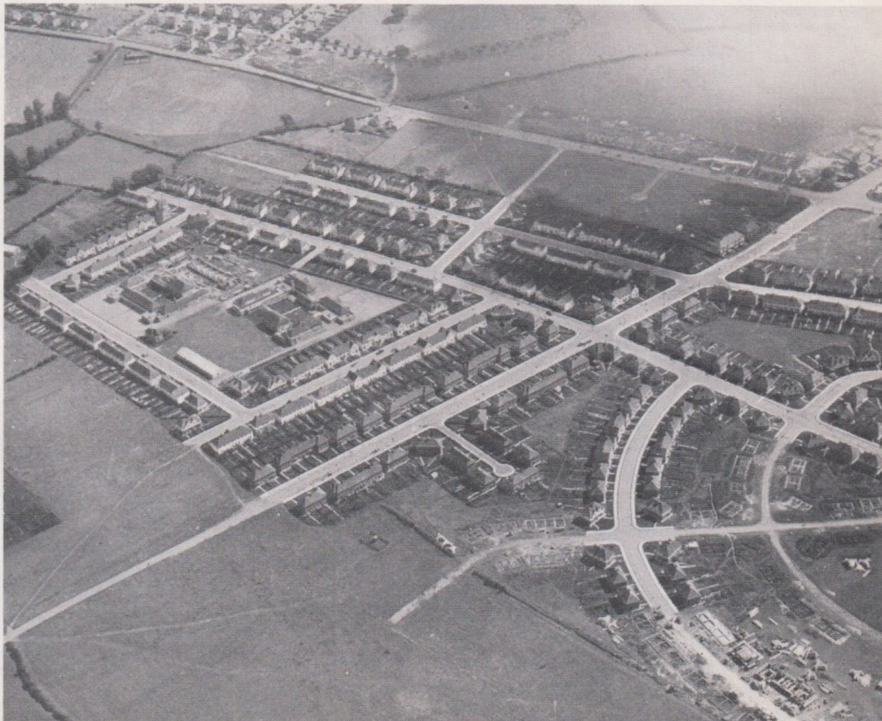




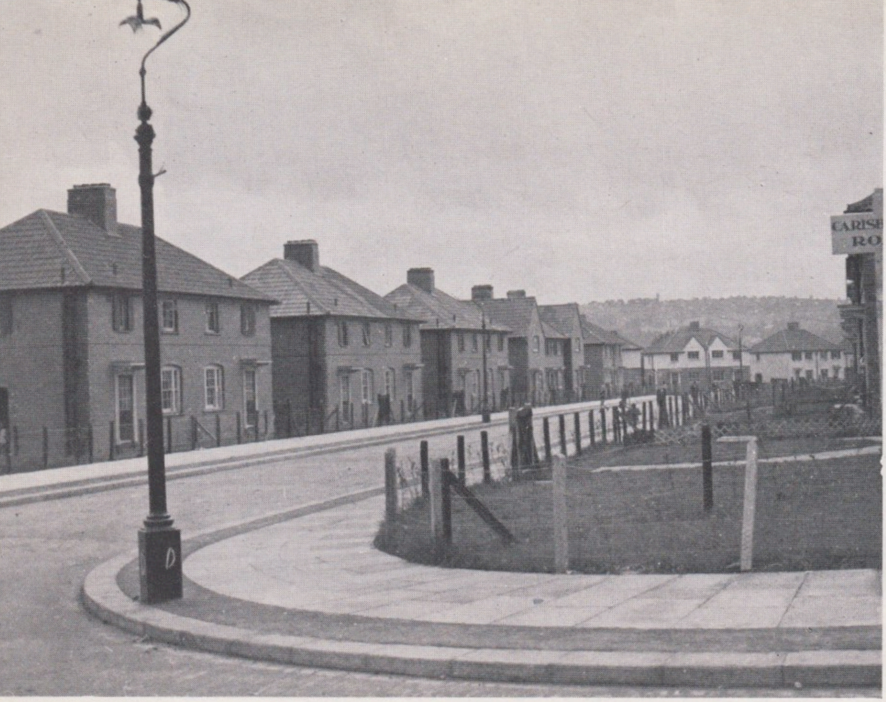
Knowle Park Estate.
[Aero Films Ltd.]

Aerial views make it possible to observe the process by which the new estates are swallowing up the surrounding country.

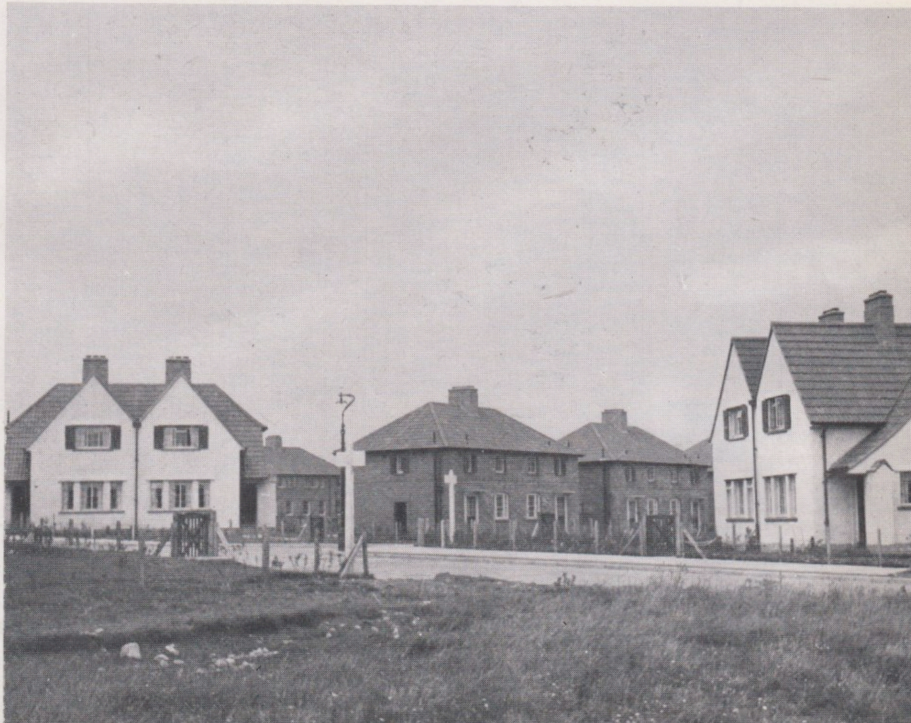
Southmead Estate.
["Evening Post."]

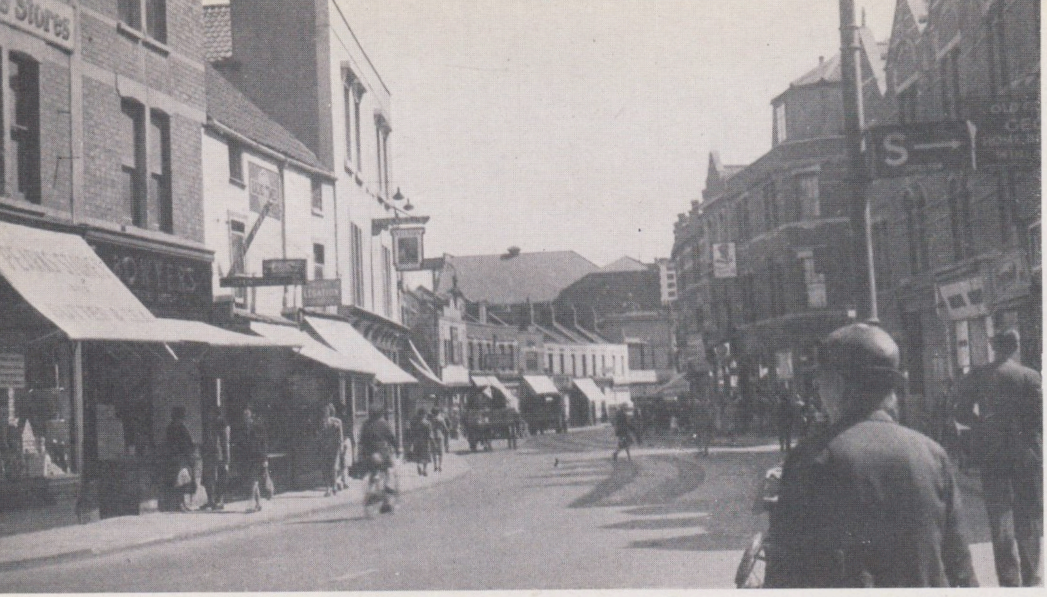


The process of absorption is shown dramatically in this picture of development in progress.



Two of the roads at Filwood Park show a raw estate at its worst. Trees and hedges can do something to screen the plainness and incoherence so starkly evident in these pictures.

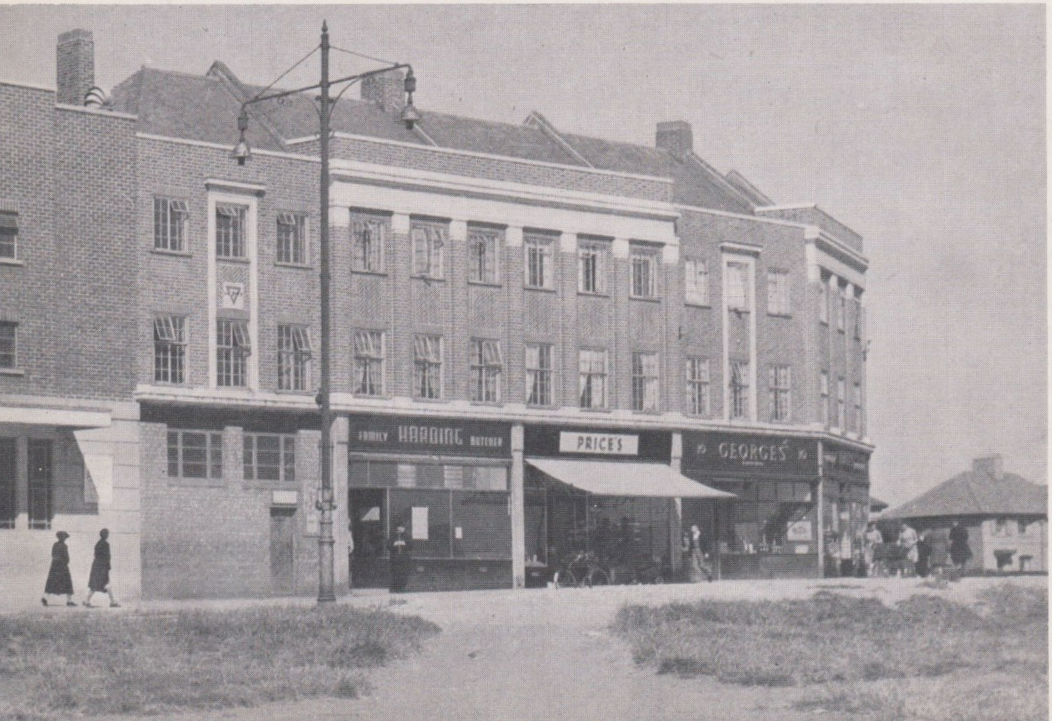


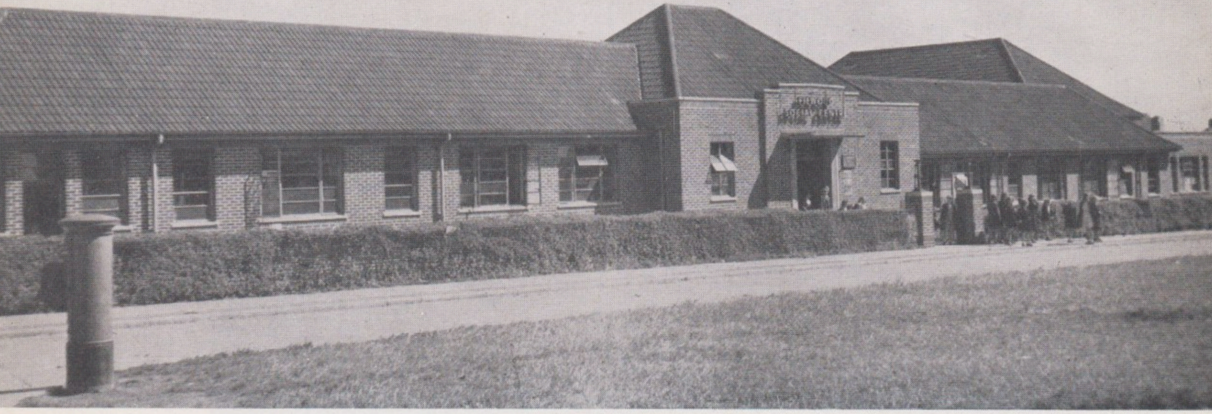


East Street, Bedminster.

These two illustrations, taken on the same morning, point the contrast in liveliness between a shopping street in one of the older parts of the city and an estate shopping centre.

Filwood Broadway, main shopping centre for Filwood Park. Note the cinema on the left of the picture.

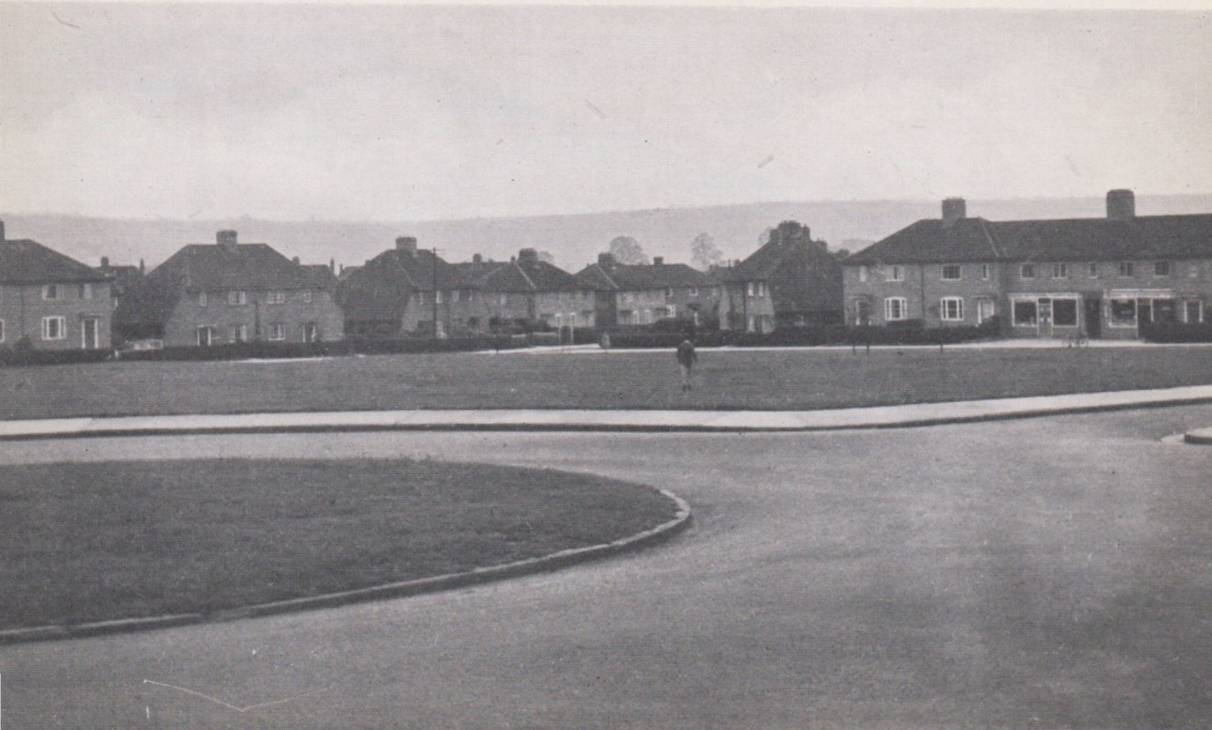

FAMILY HARDING BUTCHER
PRICE'S
GEORGES



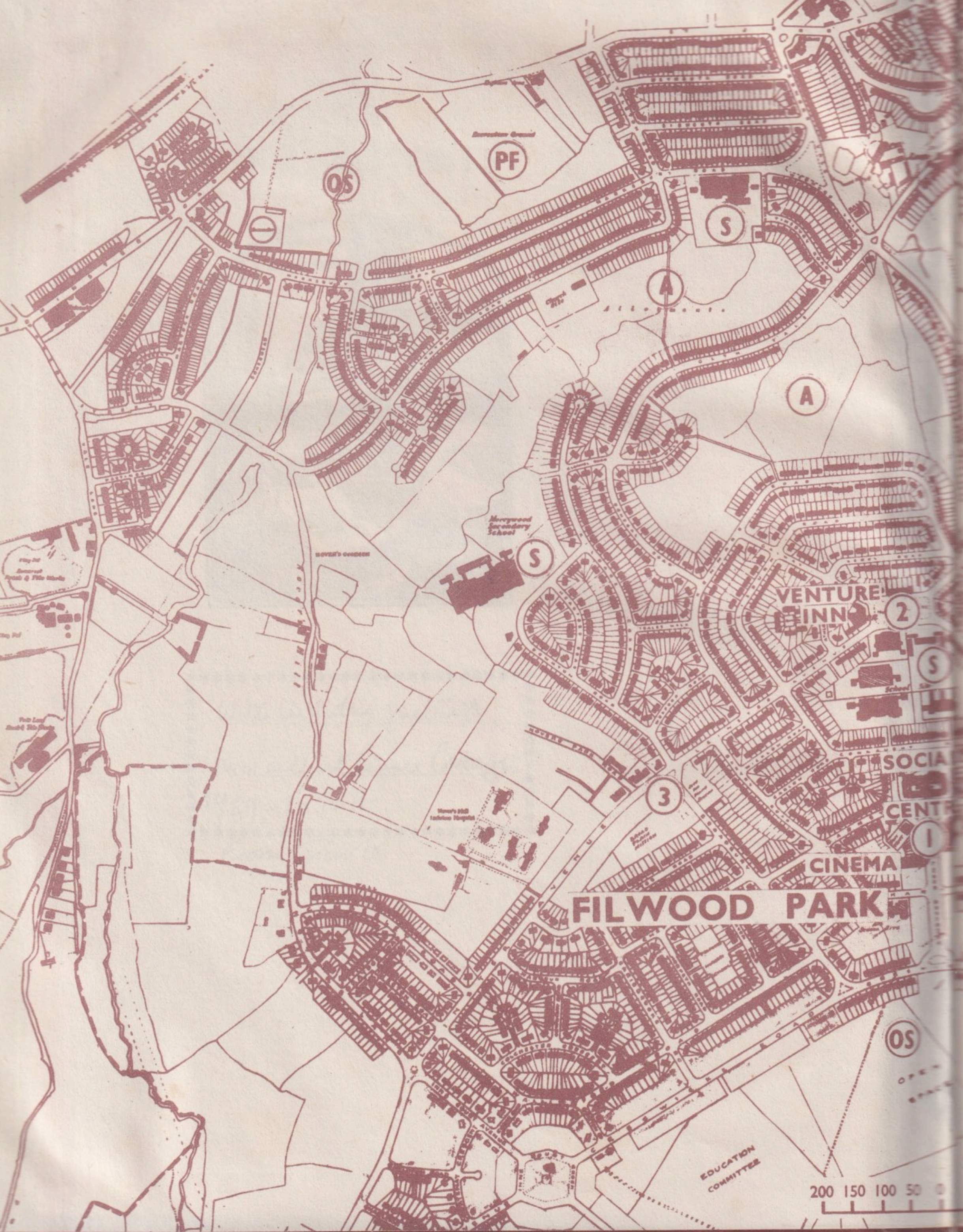
Filwood Social Centre.

The planning of a focus involves more than the generous allocation of space. At Filwood Park the Social Centre—together with the shops and cinema shown on the preceding page—provide a natural magnet.

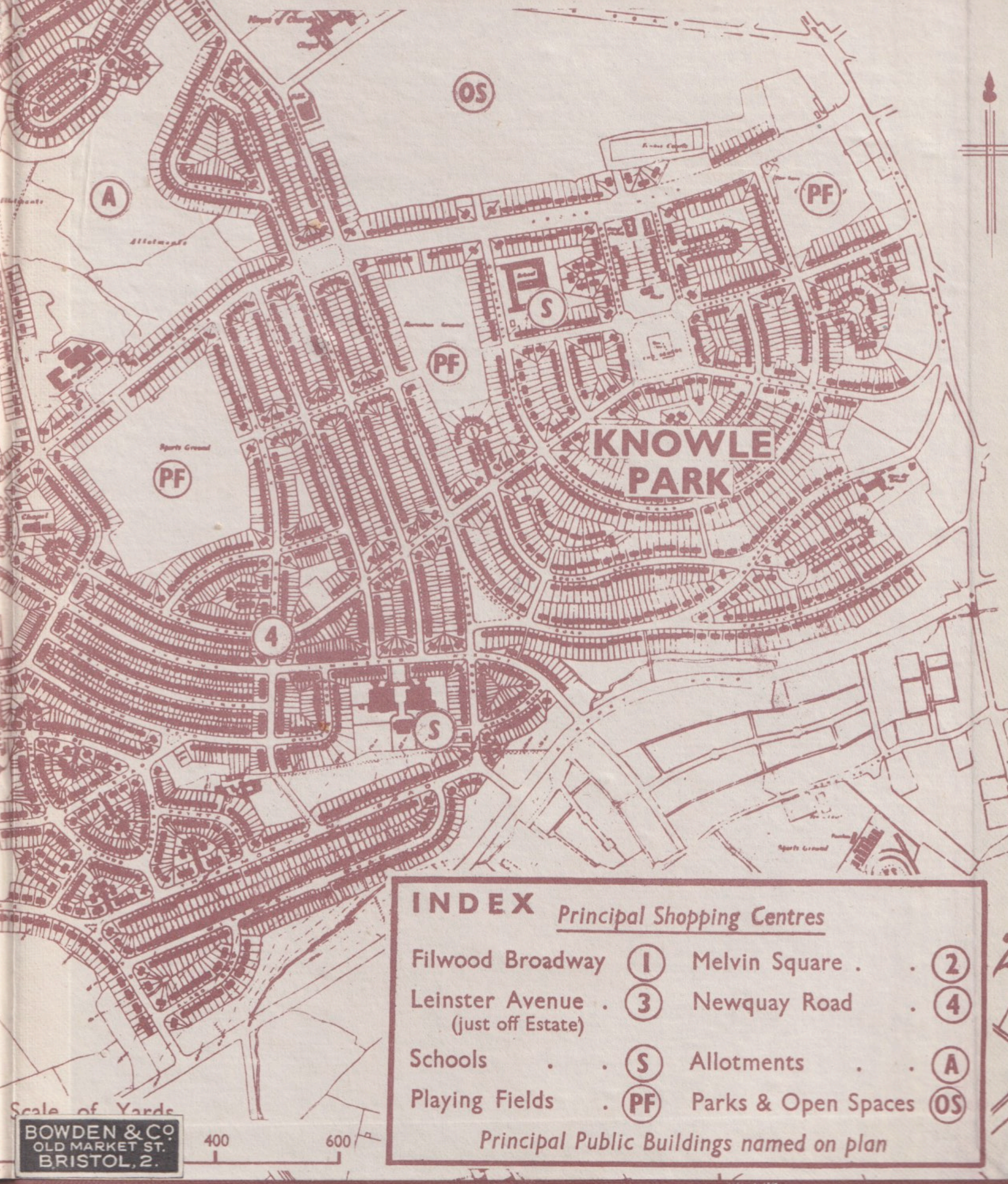
Another estate centre, with plenty of space but little use made of it.



Though many of the worst slums were cleared before the war, and others have been demolished in the blitzes, much derelict property has still to be eliminated. These typical views of outworn terraces remind us of the tasks ahead.


Recreation Ground
PF
OS
S
Church Site
A
Allotments
A
Merrywood Secondary School
S
VENTURE INN
2
S
School
SOCIA
CENT
1
CINEMA
3
Novers Hill Isolation Hospital
FILWOOD PARK
OS
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
200 150 100 50 0

KNOWLE & BEDMINSTER ESTATE


OS
A
Allotments
PF
Recreation Ground
S
Sports Ground
PF
KNOWLE PARK
Chapel
4
S
Sports Ground
Scale of Yards
400
600

INDEX *Principal Shopping Centres*

Filwood Broadway	①	Melvin Square . .	②
Leinster Avenue . (just off Estate)	③	Newquay Road .	④
Schools . .	S	Allotments . .	A
Playing Fields .	PF	Parks & Open Spaces	OS

Principal Public Buildings named on plan

BOWDEN & Co.
OLD MARKET ST.
BRISTOL, 2.